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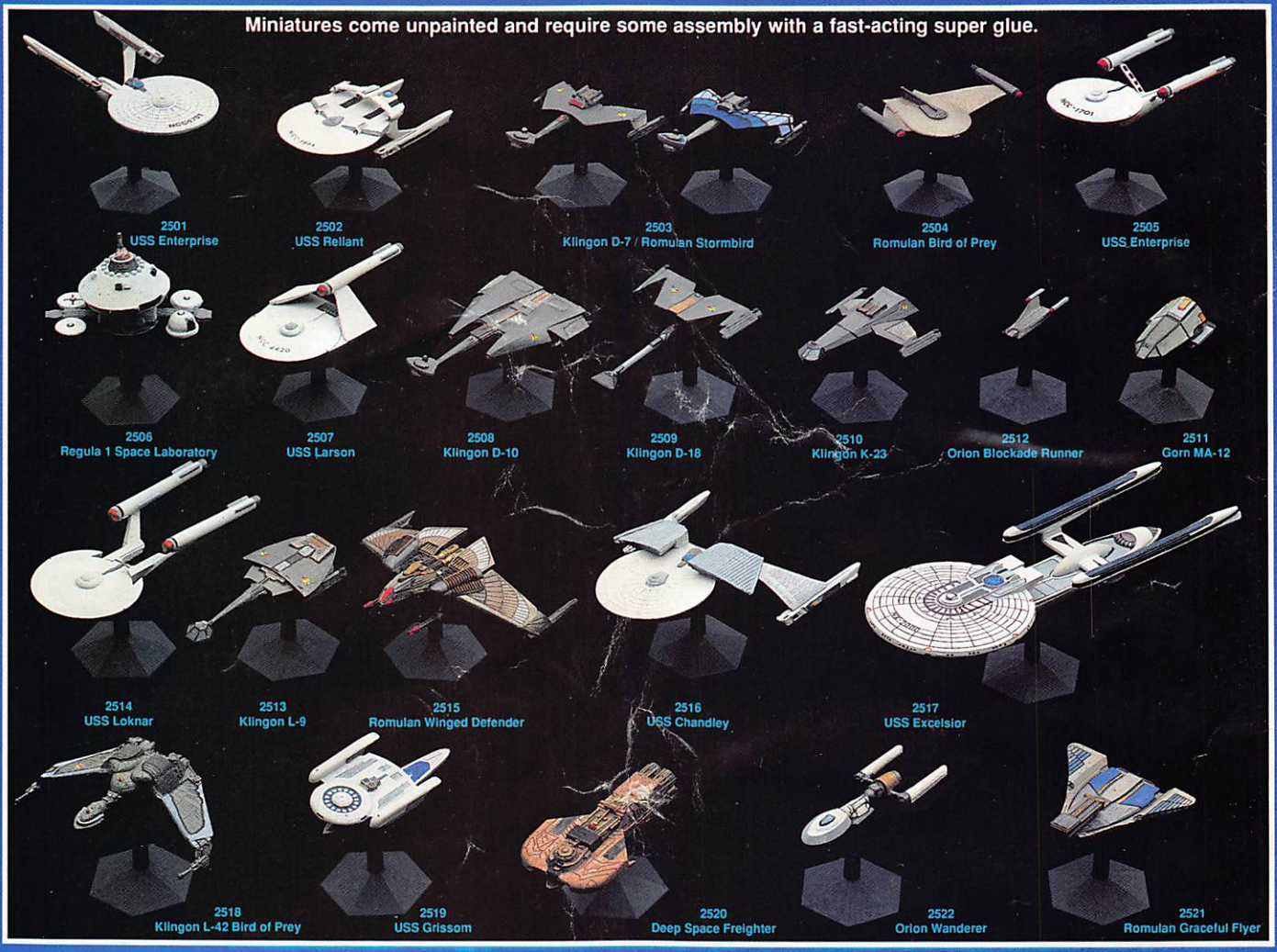

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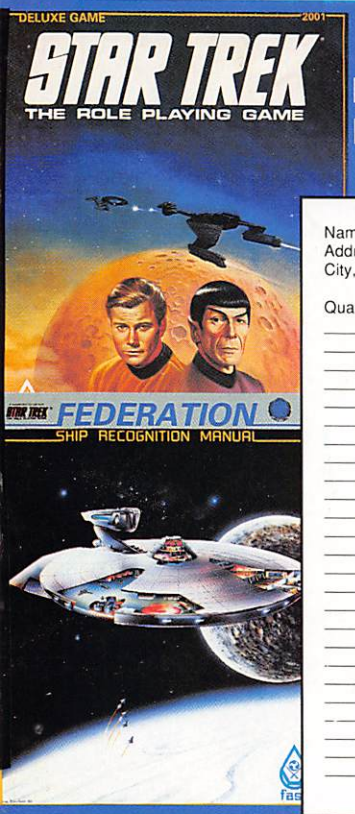

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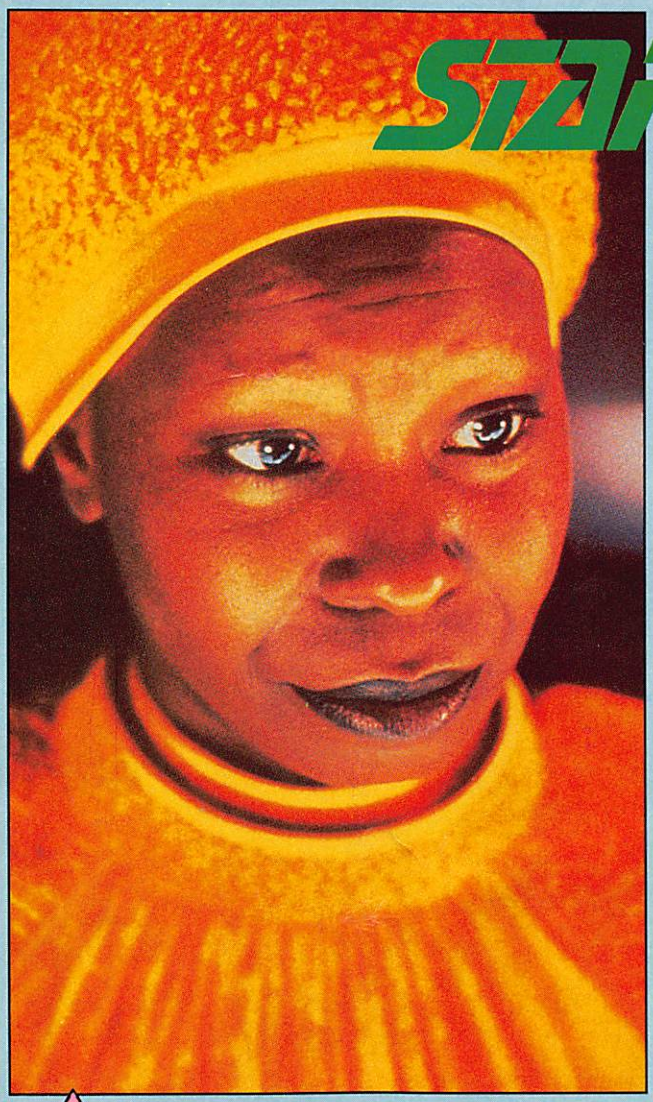

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The Official Magazine

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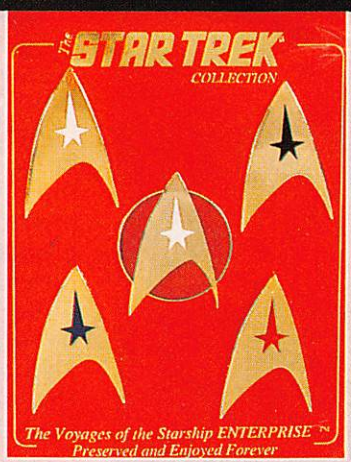

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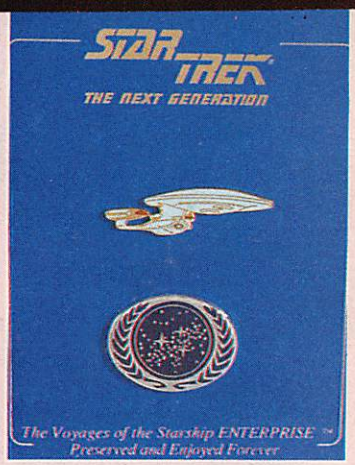

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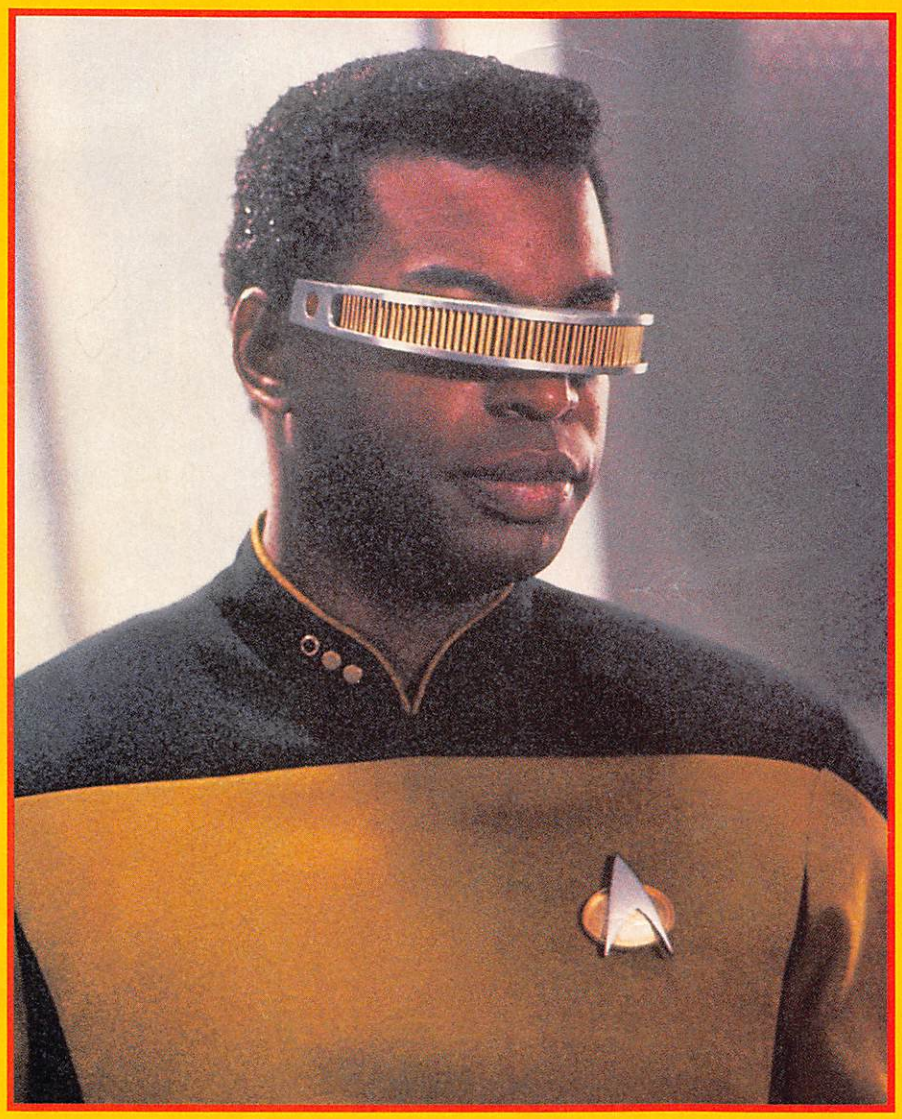
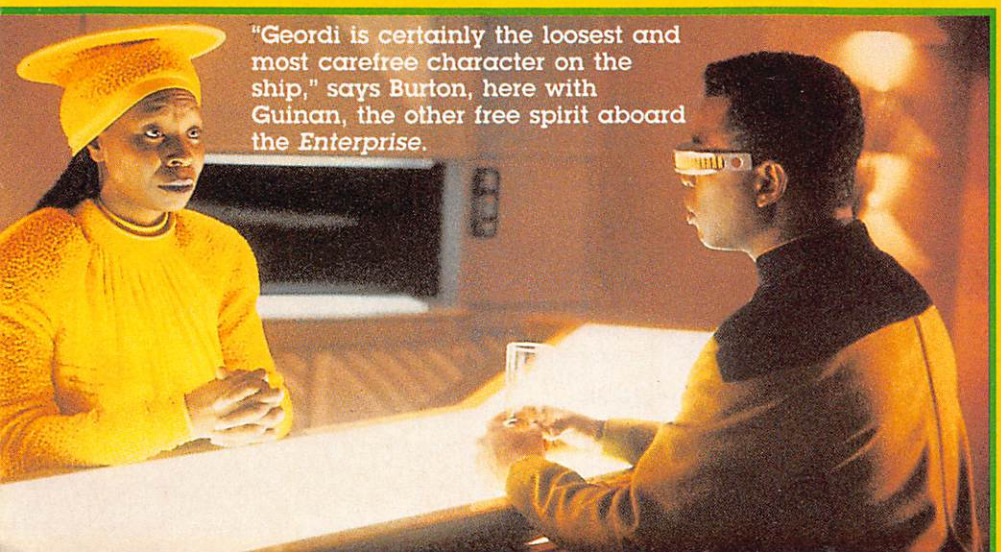
LeVar Burton

Lt. Geordi La Forge

By MARC SHAPIRO





"Geordi is certainly the loosest and most carefree character on the ship," says Burton, here with Guinan, the other free spirit aboard the *Enterprise*.

LeVar Burton knows the realities of series television. That's why he didn't balk at the thinness of his character Geordi La Forge during the first season of *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*.

"I saw clearly that the show's priorities during that first season were going to be to develop the characters of Picard, Riker and Data," explains Burton. "If I had been producing the show, those would have been *my* priorities, too. But I also knew that, if I was patient, I would eventually come to see Geordi as a clearly defined human being."

Burton's patience paid off for, as *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION* gathers its forces during this fourth season, La Forge has evolved from simply being "the blind guy who flies the ship" to a fully functioning, multi-faceted and integral element of the *STAR TREK* universe.

Burton, who divides his time between *NEXT GENERATION*, *Captain Planet* and *Reading Rainbow* TV duties, claims that the first season notion of La Forge as a gimmicky addition to the *Enterprise* couldn't be further from the truth.

"I *never* saw Geordi as being a gimmicky kind of character," defends Burton. "I always saw his situation as the ship's pilot as a real natural utilization of this man's specific abilities in a job to which he seemed emotionally well suited. I never got the feeling that Geordi had been created to be an attention grabber.

"A large part of Geordi's personality, as the show has evolved, has revolved around his identification of being the ship's pilot. Even though he has been promoted to the rank of Chief Engineer, I've always seen

Geordi as being a pilot at heart."

But Burton, who wears yet another hat as the head of his own film production company, Eagle Nation Films, claims that the promotion to Engineering has done wonders in beefing up Geordi La Forge.

"I'm definitely more comfortable being in Engineering and I don't feel isolated at all," Burton reports. "The big plus is that having an important area of responsibility has put me right in the middle of just about every story. When we go to Engineering in a story, it's because something integral to the plot is going on there and we need Geordi to contribute to moving the story along. So, I feel that, since I've been in Engineering, I've definitely had much more to do."

Burton is a bit vague on specific first and second season highlights but points to third season episodes "The Enemy" and "Booby Trap" as "episodes that gave Geordi much to do." And it is in episodes like these and others that Burton claims fans see Geordi as the most down-to-earth member of the *NEXT GENERATION* cast.

"Geordi is certainly the loosest and most carefree character on the ship. He's the one who is quicker to have a good time, quicker to see the lighter side and quicker to not take everything so seriously. These are the characteristics of a person who really enjoys being out there on the edge and who enjoys flying by the seat of his pants."

And it is that facet of his character that Burton thinks makes La Forge ripe for possible interesting plot developments in seasons to come.

"We've already seen Geordi interact with women and have a near-romantic relationship," relates Burton, "and I think it would be an interesting idea to have Geordi get married which, in turn, would let us see a side of the *Enterprise* and its society that we really *haven't* seen before."

Burton, whose comments are often couched in philosophical terms, balks at considering what he would specifically like to happen to Geordi in *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*'s fourth season.

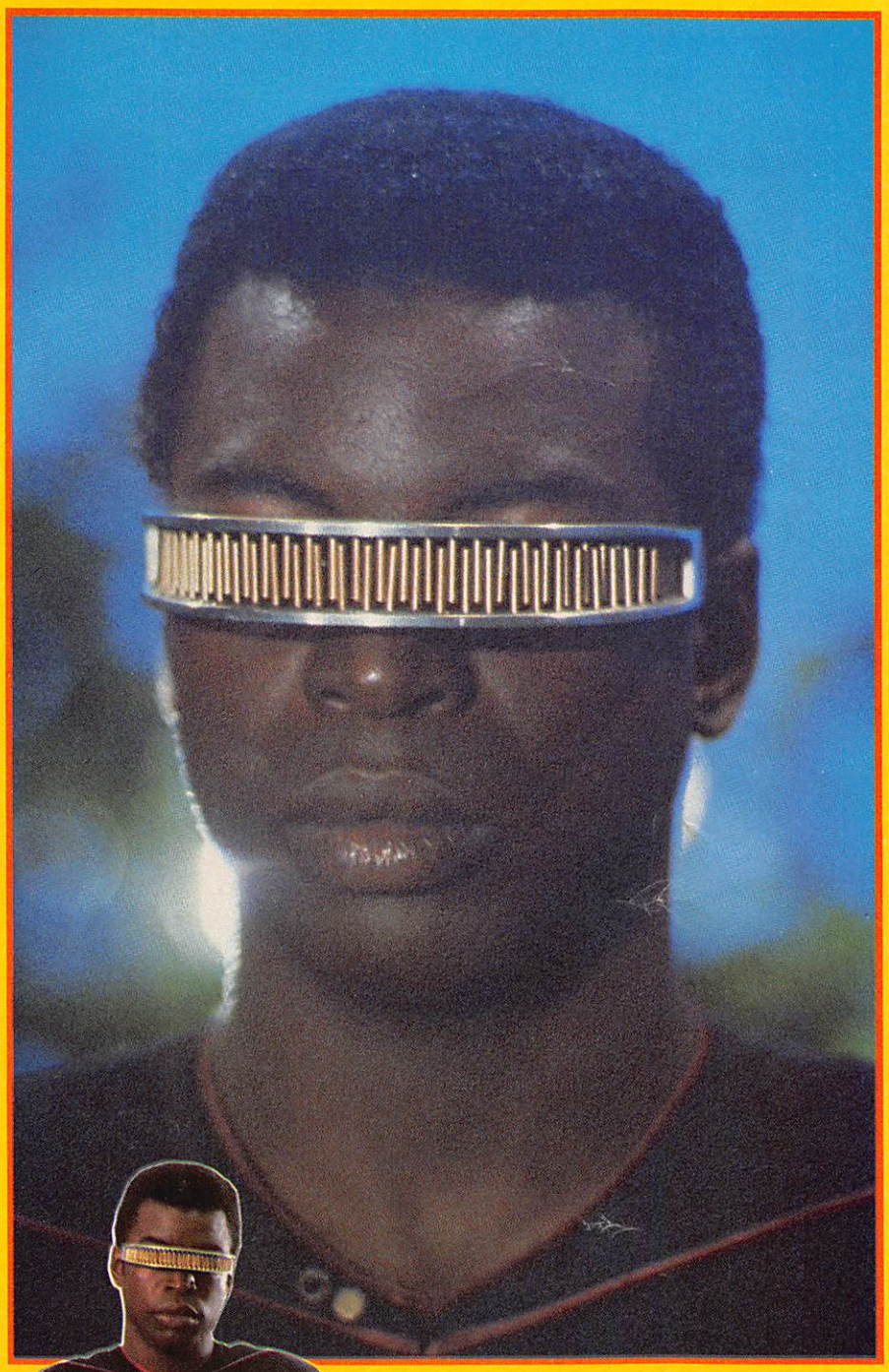
Being promoted to Chief of Engineering hasn't isolated Geordi from his fellow shipmates.

"I don't look at being on *STAR TREK* as a year-by-year thing. I see many areas where the show could grow over the next three years. But my whole philosophy in life has been to show up and see what happens. When you try and plan too much, you close yourself off to spontaneity and the wonderful surprises that life can bring you.

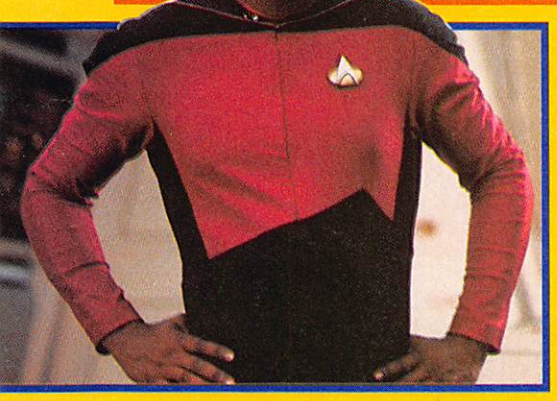
"I don't expect anything to happen to Geordi that would be out of character for him. Giving him a harder or mercenary edge would not only be surprising but totally inappropriate. We're three years into this show and have built a very strong sense of who these characters are. I have no qualms about having Geordi grow and explore who he is, but it would be unthinkable to tamper with who he is."

While three years on *THE NEXT GENERATION* have definitely given him a high profile, Burton claims that his status as "celebrity" hasn't changed much.

"Before I did *STAR TREK*, people would come up to me in the supermarket and say things like, 'I thought you were wonderful in *Roots*,' or 'You were great in *The Ron LeFlore Story*,' or, 'My kids think you're great on



The actor would like to see Geordi develop roots by getting married on the show.



"I came to know who Geordi La Forge was and I knew instantly that I *liked* him," remembers Burton of his early voyages with the Lieutenant.

Reading Rainbow.' They still come up to me and say those things only now they add, 'And we think you're great on *STAR TREK.*'

"It's nice to be recognized for doing good work," he continues. "At least, I would like to think that's what people are liking. Celebrity doesn't really mean much when you're not doing anything to merit that attention."

It was a mutual admiration for the original *STAR TREK* between himself and the then-*NEXT GENERATION* producer Robert Justman that led to the actor's reading for the part of Geordi La Forge.

"We got to know each other when I did another film for him called *Emergency Room* and we used to sit around the set and talk about old *STAR TREK* episodes," Burton recalls. "He saw how enthusiastic I was about the old show and, when they began casting *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*, he asked me to come in and read."

What he found in the pilot, "Encounter at Farpoint," and Geordi's character was skeletal at best.

"There wasn't a whole lot for me to hang my hat on," says Burton, "but I knew going in, that would change once the show got off the ground. And by the time the second season came around, I was able to see Geordi as a clearly defined human. I came to know who Geordi La Forge was and I knew instantly that I *liked* him."

LeVar Burton, in conversation comes across, in manner and attitude, as a mirror image of Geordi La Forge. Burton offers that the similarity between his role and his real life is fairly close.

"Geordi and I are pretty much alike," he says. "Where we're different is that Geordi has a lot of natural things in his life. I, on the other hand, am *constantly* working towards the ability to accept totally who I am and move on from there. Geordi is absolutely comfortable with himself and his life. If we could all be like Geordi, it wouldn't be such a bad thing."

But LeVar Burton stops short of holding Geordi La Forge up as a symbol that fans should attempt to emulate.

"Geordi is *not* a symbol," he insists. "What he is is a model for a way of being that seems, at least on *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*, to work." ●

"A Matter of Perspective"

Written by ED ZUCKERMAN
Based on STAR TREK
created by GENE RODDENBERRY
Synopsis for STARLOG
by ROBERT GREENBERGER

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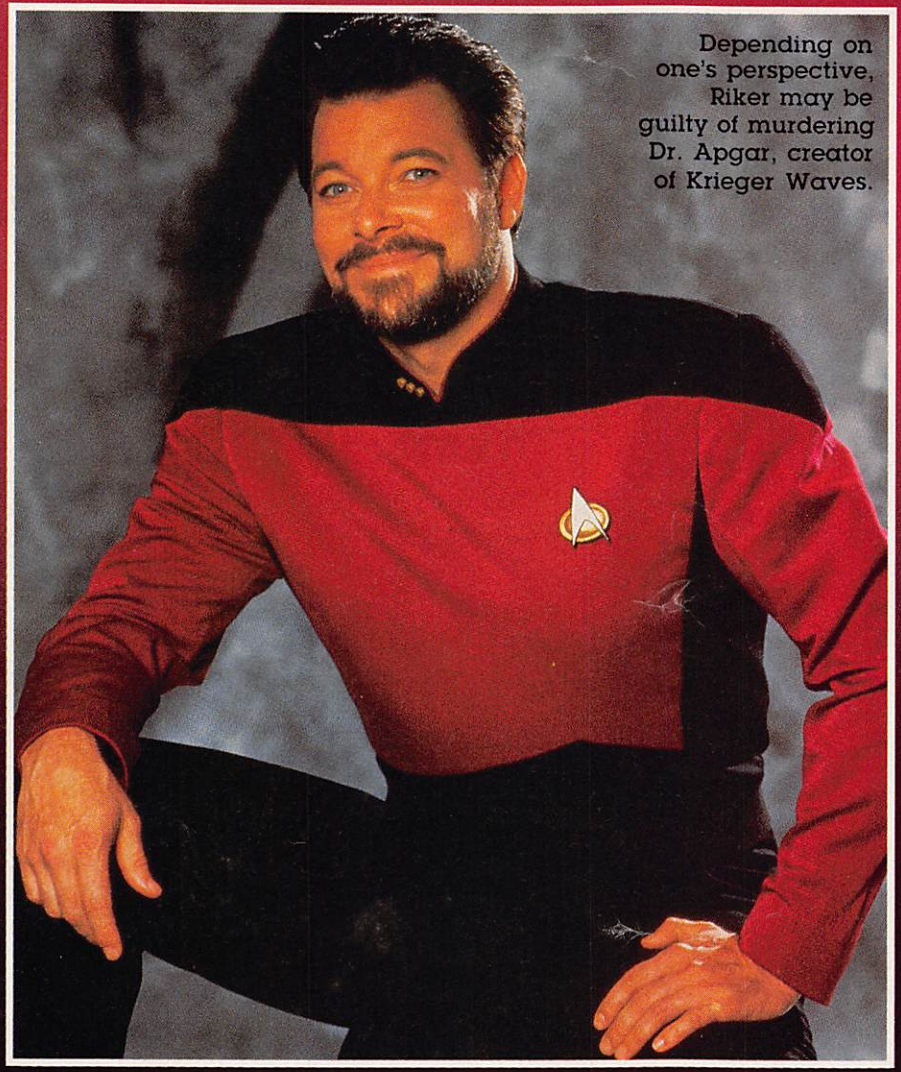


Depending on one's perspective, Riker may be guilty of murdering Dr. Apgar, creator of Krieger Waves.

One of the advantages to routine assignments is that it affords Captain Jean-Luc Picard time to explore artistic pursuits. While in orbit around Tanuga Four, Picard is enjoying a figure painting class, when Lt. Commander Data arrives with word that the Away Team has already completed its mission surveying Dr. Nel Apgar's work.

To Picard's surprise, Chief Engineer Geordi La Forge returns ahead of Commander Will Riker. There seems to have been a problem on the station with Dr. Apgar, but not regarding his work on creating Krieger Waves. Before La Forge can explain, Riker signals, sharply announcing he's ready to return to the ship. Transporter Chief O'Brien begins the process, but just then, the space station explodes. However, O'Brien manages to rematerialize Riker without harm.

A little later, Picard assesses the situation and is mildly annoyed to find that no one is sure why the space station blew up.

Turning to his First Officer, Picard begins, "Mr. La Forge indicated this was not an entirely *routine* mission..."

"It's a long story, sir," Riker responds, "but I'm sure it doesn't have anything to do with this accident."

Before anything else can be determined, Chief Investigator Krag from the planet arrives and demands the arrest of Riker on suspicion of murder. Surprised, Picard turns the Bridge over to Riker and escorts Krag into his Ready Room. There, Krag reveals that two witnesses have come forward detailing Riker's threats on Dr. Apgar's life.

Picard protests the request and suggests the investigation proceed aboard the *Enterprise*. Krag disagrees, noting he needs access to data and the ability to re-create events to determine motive and cause. At that, Picard says he can help and summons Data. Once the android officer reports, the Captain is informed that the Holodeck can re-create the precise specifications of the space station. Therefore, they will hold the inquest aboard ship.

Krag leaves to assemble his data and witnesses. In turn, Picard asks La Forge and Riker to help by detailing everything they heard and saw on the station. Quietly, he asks for Counselor Troi's assistance with the re-creation. "My decision about the extradition will be based on the evidence presented during these re-creations," Picard announces.

After 18 hours of careful study, research and deposition, the Holodeck is programmed to re-create the space station. The re-creations have a nominal 8.7% margin of error. Picard summons Krag, and

The Holodeck provides an interesting twist on *Rashomon* as it re-creates the events that led to Apgar's demise.

with everyone seated, Riker begins with a protestation of innocence. The computer runs a simulation of his deposition.

In Riker's version, Apgar is shown as a gruff, anti-social man, seemingly more interested in Krieger Waves than people. However, his wife, Manua, is much more friendly and according to Riker, was flirtatious. Forced to socialize, Apgar admits to resenting Starfleet intrusion in his work, admitting to some setbacks but convinced that the Krieger Wave converter will soon be ready. Dr. Apgar then asks Tayna to show La Forge the specifics and they go off to study the set-up, including the Lambda Field generator on the planet below.

Apgar is at first surprised and then defensive when he hears Riker explain that the *Enterprise* was in the vicinity to study a proto-star cloud and that he and La Forge were dropped off to take advantage of the proximity. He says they will have to stay on the planet, but Manua insists they stay at the station, which displeases Apgar, who keeps his temper under control.

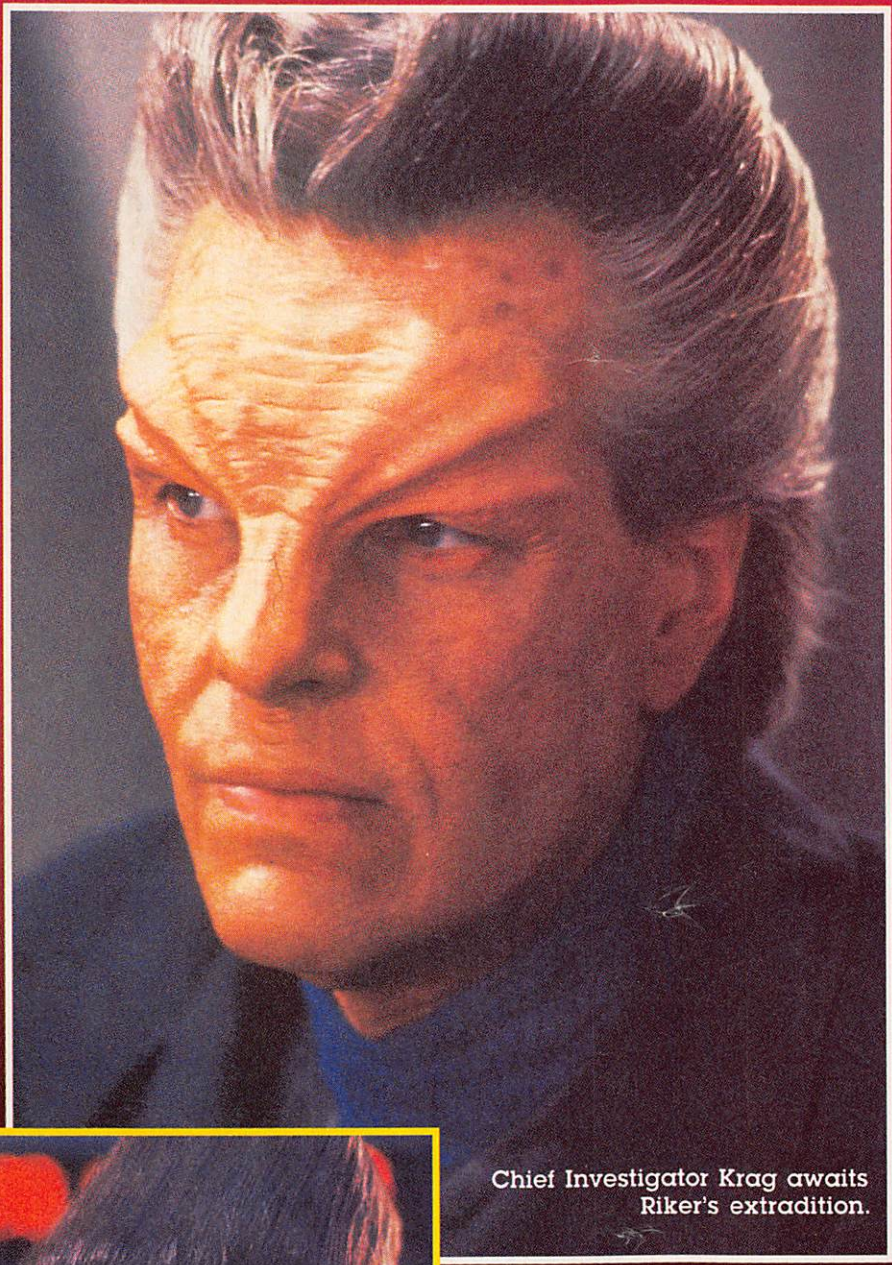
Manua shows Riker to guest quarters. According to Riker's testimony, she was obviously flirting with him. When she lets part of her dress fall, he puts it back in place and asks her to leave. Before she can comply, Apgar shows up, angry and jealous. In short order, he slaps Manua and takes a swing at Riker, who effortlessly deflects the blow, allowing the momentum to bring Apgar to his knees. "You won't get away with this!" Apgar charges. "I'll see to it."

At that point, Riker freezes the program and notes he did not see Apgar again until after La Forge returned to the *Enterprise* the following day. As the testimony continues, Riker tries to smooth over the misunderstanding, but Apgar still seethes. He first accuses Riker of being sent to write a bad report, but then tries to defend his requests for more material. "I have no need for explanations," Riker snaps. The scientist refuses to back down, so Riker shrugs and asks to be beamed back home.

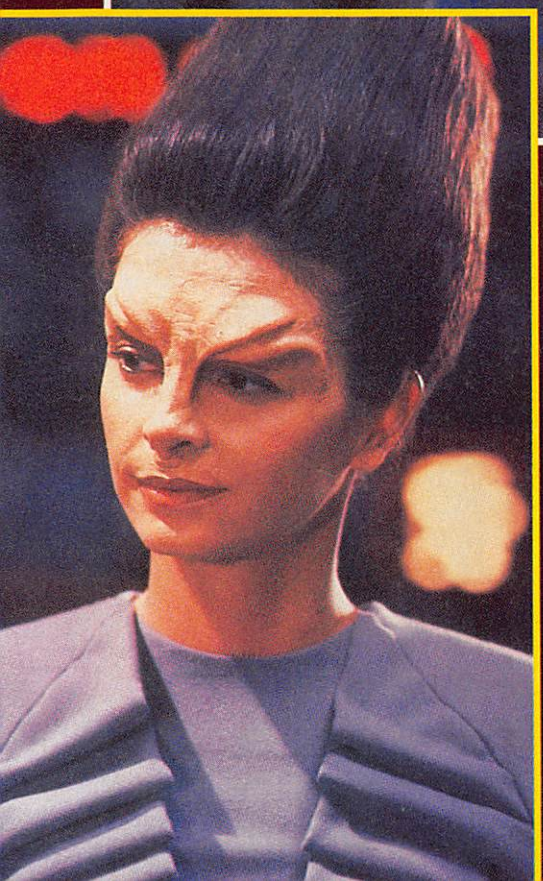
Krag watches the program end and then suggests that Apgar lost his life in a deliberate manner. Reports on the planet showed a phaser was fired from exactly where Riker was standing, triggering the reactor explosion. To support his belief, he runs his own version of the final conversation. Riker watches, horrified, to see his hologram coldly fire the phaser at the reactor just as the transporter beam grabs him. "Three seconds later," says Krag, "the space station exploded."

Back on the Bridge, Ensign Wesley Crusher watches a screen with Data and La Forge, confirming Krag's report that some form of energy *was* fired just before Riker transported back to the *Enterprise*.

In the Holodeck, the hearing proceeds as Krag brings in Manua Apgar. She eyes Riker,



Chief Investigator Krag awaits Riker's extradition.



Although not a direct witness, Dr. Apgar's assistant, Tayna, is allowed to tell her side of the story.

but declines to make a formal statement. "I just know he did it," she says of Riker. "He killed my husband." Once seated, her testimony begins. It is no surprise to Riker that her memories are different. She is projected as a loving wife, supporting a frustrated scientist. When Riker arrives, instead of Manua being flirtatious, it now seems that Riker was using his charm on her. The story continues much the same until she pours Apgar and Riker drinks in the living area. Riker asks to stay aboard the station. She says it's inconvenient but relents under his smile. When she shows him his quarters, he corners her, trying to have his way with her until Apgar arrives, although the scientist is immediately decked by fast uppercuts. Apgar swears Riker won't get away with such actions and both officers and civilians in the Holodeck watch as Riker warns Apgar that reporting this incident would be a serious mistake.

With the program over, Manua allows herself to cry. Picard calls a recess. Alone with Troi, Riker asks if she detected Manua's deception. No, she replies. To Manua, the events are *exactly* as they appeared in the Holodeck. Riker's shocked at this and fears that her version "puts a noose around my neck."

At that moment, Lt. Worf warns Dr. Beverly Crusher that freak radiation has been detected in Sick Bay, ordering an immediate evacuation. Shortly, Captain Picard is brought up to date by La Forge and Data. It appears that they detected a five-hour, 20-minute and three-second interval, exactly four times removed from the time of the explosion aboard the station. Picard recognizes the possibility of a link, but he's also concerned that the radiation could damage the starship. With just over five hours before the next burst, Picard allows his officers to study and prepare, and heads back to the Holodeck with his First Officer.

Although she was not a direct witness to events, under Tanugan law, the deposition of Dr. Apgar's assistant is considered valid. Fascinated, Riker watches Tayna's "evidence." The simulation finds Apgar coming into the quarters while Riker and Manua embrace. Riker throws a wild punch, but is quickly floored by the "heroic" Apgar. Riker shouts, "You're a dead man, Apgar! A dead man!" Tayna's simulation shows Apgar asking Tayna to take his wife to Tanuga while he alerts the authorities. The next morning came the explosion and Apgar's death.

Dismissing his "witness," Krag faces Picard. "Captain, I have established motive, method and opportunity. In any

court in the Federation, that is sufficient to warrant the extradition of the accused. I await your decision forthwith."

Picard takes Troi to his Ready Room where he admits that the facts which weigh so heavily against their friend dictate that Riker must be extradited. But before they can talk further, Data announces over the comlink that the mysterious radiation's cause has been found.

La Forge reveals that the Lambda Field generator on Tanuga emits an energy burst and then requires precisely five hours, 20 minutes and three seconds to recharge. The Lambda Field is harmless, but something has happened. Now, La Forge, Wesley and Data have determined the source of the radiation, why the space station exploded and who killed Apgar.

A little bit later, Picard reconvenes the hearing with all parties and carefully leads them through a review of events, putting all three versions of events into perspective. First, Picard identifies that Apgar claimed the Krieger Wave work was unfinished and he needed more time, but the Chief Engineer says that the radiation was the result of Krieger Waves. Therefore, Apgar *lied*.

La Forge and Picard explain that the Holodeck so carefully re-created Apgar's lab that it also re-created the Krieger Wave converter. So, when the Lambda Field emitted energy, the Holodeck simulation turned them into Krieger Waves.

A quick review of comments common to all three versions shows that Apgar wanted to "reward" Manua, buying things that cost more than he could earn from Starfleet. But if he enlarged the device, it would be a weapon worth a fortune to hostile races such as the Romulans or Ferengi. In fact, Apgar had been ordering extra dicosilium to enlarge the Krieger coils. When the *Enterprise* arrived three months earlier than anticipated, Apgar may have suspected Starfleet was on to him.

From Manua's point-of-view, Riker was trying to come between her and her husband.

Tayna claimed that Apgar was going to alert authorities, but instead, he's seen as activating the Lambda generator. Picard submits that Apgar wanted to kill Riker—partly out of revenge and partly to divert Starfleet's attention. When Riker said to Apgar that he didn't need explanations, Apgar decided that meant Riker knew about his plans. So, Apgar must have tried to use the Krieger Wave to kill Riker just before beaming to the *Enterprise*. La Forge theorizes that the Wave actually bounced off the transporter beam and blew up the reactor. "An interesting hypothesis," says Krag, "but impossible to prove."

La Forge provides the proof by admitting the Lambda Field has been emitting beams like clockwork...except the time of the explosion when there was a .0014 second delay during the first discharge. Just long enough for the Wave to bounce off the beam.

To demonstrate, they have rigged the Holodeck to re-create the accident just as the next Lambda Wave is emitted from Tanuga. Picard has the Holodeck computer replay the last conversation between Riker and Apgar and just as predicted, the transporter beam envelopes Riker as the Lambda Field emission hits the Krieger converter and bounces from Riker to the reactor, causing the explosion.

"Dr. Apgar killed himself," says Picard, "during his attempt to kill Commander Riker."

Krag watches the Holodeck empty, leaving everyone silent. "Based on this new evidence, I withdraw my request for Commander Riker's extradition. Commander," he says, "my apologies."

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MISSION REPORT

Investigating a radiation anomaly reported by Starbase 105, the *Enterprise* finds an unusual phenomenon.

Captain Picard is listening to Lt. Cmdr. Data's analysis of the anomaly when from his tactical post, Lt. Worf interrupts.

"Captain! Something's happening. A new change in sensor readings."

Then, out of a swirling cloud that has appeared before them comes a strangely familiar but heavily damaged vessel. Picard requests sensor readings as times suddenly change. "Is that an enemy vessel?" he asks.

From the tactical post, Lt. Tasha Yar identifies the vessel: "*NCC-1701... C.U.S.S. Enterprise.*"

The crew of the *Enterprise-D* stare in astonishment at the sight of the long-lost starship as both of ships float before the strange cloud in space—none of them aware that the universe has been inexplicably altered at the precise moment the *Enterprise-C* emerged.

"The *Enterprise-C* was last seen near the Klingon outpost Narenda Three exactly 22 years, three months and four days ago," Lt. Commander Data reports crisply.

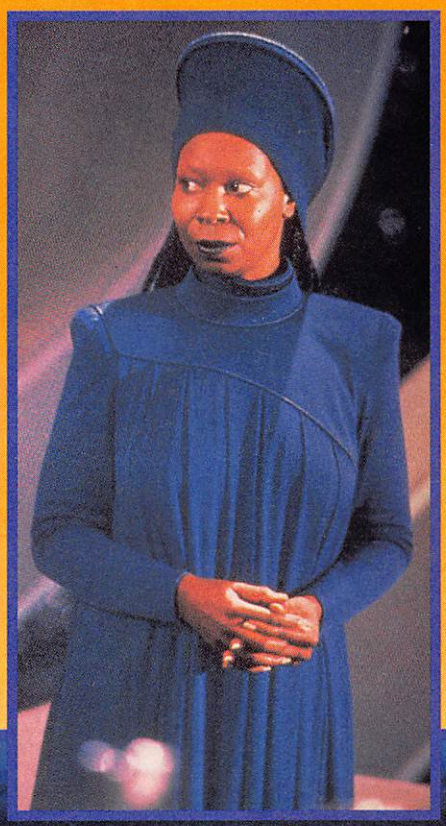
"Has it been adrift for all those years?" Picard asks, frowning. "Or has it traveled through time?"

Scanning the ship, Yar finds life signs. Riker orders transporters and Sick Bay on standby, but Picard countermands him with a brusque warning. If the *Enterprise-C* has indeed traveled through time, contact with her could affect the present.

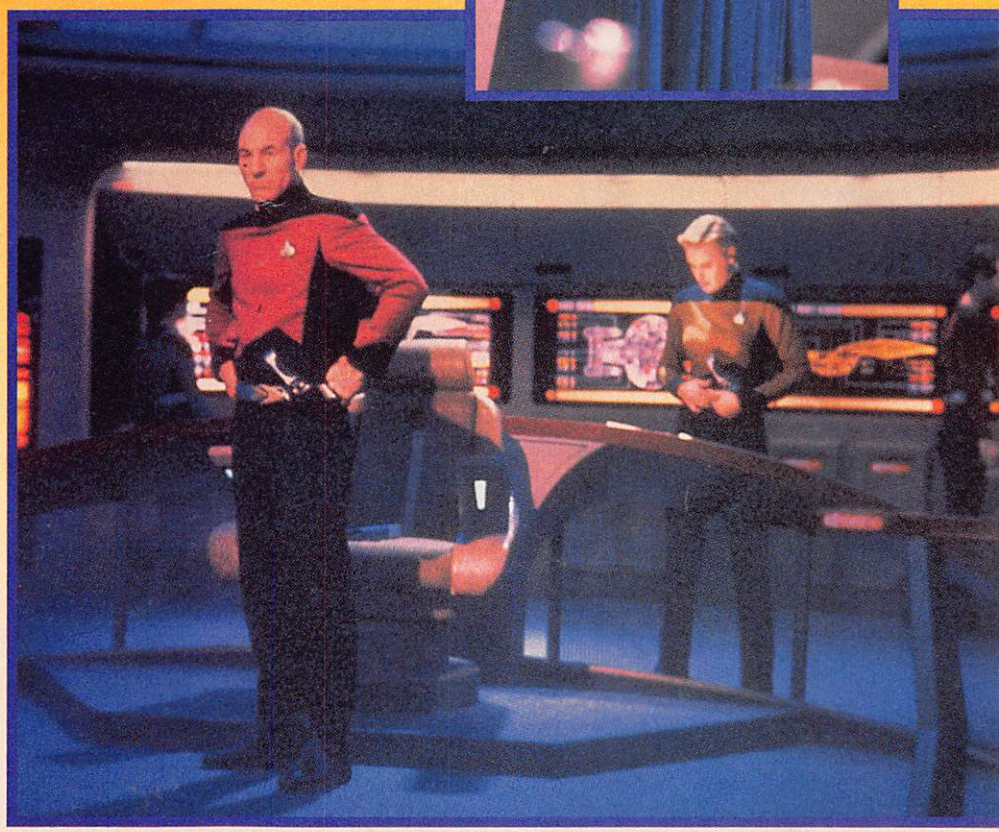
A distress message from Captain Garrett of the other *Enterprise* settles the matter. With a warning to Riker to keep specific knowledge "of where and when they are" from the others, Picard dispatches him to the other ship. Tasha, Dr. Crusher and Geordi La Forge accompany Riker.

The situation on the damaged *Enterprise* is grim. Amid flashing Red Alert signs, the Bridge is littered with dead Starfleet officers. Slumped in the captain's chair is Captain Rachel Garrett, wounded.

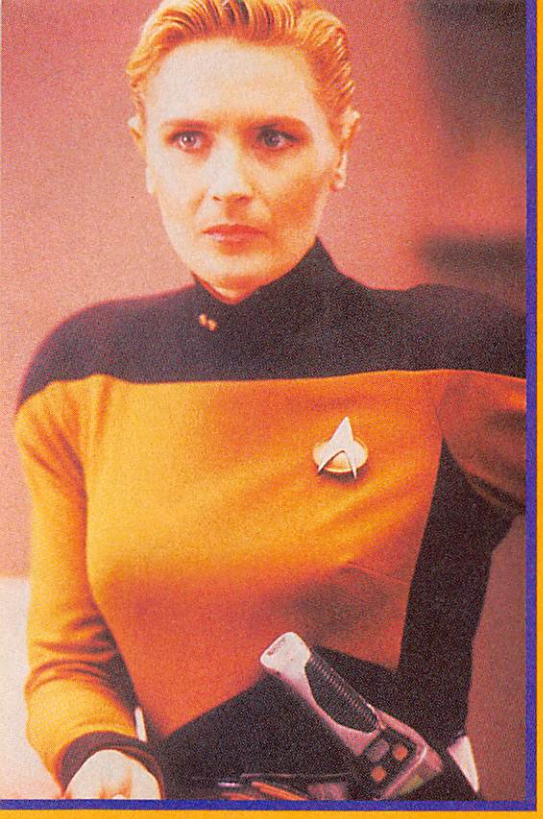
"We're from a Federation starship," Riker says carefully. Garrett reluctantly agrees to being transported to the *Enterprise-D*'s Sick Bay. Geordi moves to stabilize the ship's fal-



Time and space has altered reality, leaving the mysterious Guinan to question her surroundings.



Starfleet is now at war with the Klingons, and today its mightiest warship has encountered yesterday's *Enterprise*.



When Guinan sees Tasha Yar, she senses that something is definitely not right.

tering life support systems. Meanwhile, Riker and Tasha Yar encounter Helmsman Lt. Richard Castillo, the surviving senior officer. They soon learn that the *Enterprise-C* has only 125 surviving crew members.

Receiving this news from Riker, Captain Picard instructs his first officer that he has nine hours to make the *Enterprise-C* spaceworthy. Otherwise, it must be destroyed.

As Riker signs off, Picard is startled to see Guinan stepping off the Bridge turbolift.

"We need to talk," Guinan says with quiet force. "Somehow, this is all wrong. This is *not* the way it's supposed to be."

Repairing to the Ready Room, Guinan tries to explain to Picard that nothing about the *Enterprise* is correct. Things don't feel right, she says. The uniforms are wrong. The Bridge is wrong. The absence of children and families is wrong.

Picard scoffs, noting that the Federation is at war. Guinan gropes for a way to communicate her feelings. "No, we're not. At least, we're not supposed to be. This is not a ship of war. This is a...ship of peace."

"What you're suggesting..." Picard begins.

"That ship from the past," Guinan says solemnly, "is not supposed to be here. It's got to go back."

A troubled Picard goes to interrogate Captain Garrett, under Dr. Crusher's care in Sick Bay.

From Garrett, Picard learns that the *Enterprise-C* was answering a distress call from the Klingon outpost, Narendra Three, when they were ambushed by a fleet of Romulan Warbirds. Engaged in a fierce losing battle, Garrett recalls being hit, then a bright light—and then encountering the ship she has since learned is the *Enterprise-D*.

A cold realization sinks into Picard's mind. Perhaps time *has* been changed. "It is regrettable you did not succeed," he tells her. "A Federation starship rescuing a Klingon outpost might have averted 20 years of war."

Meanwhile, over on the other *Enterprise*, repair work continues. Tasha Yar briefs Lt. Castillo on the war between the Federation and the Klingon Empire. The Federation has lost over half its fleet to Klingons.

On *Enterprise-D*, Data has analyzed the rift. He reports that it is probably symmetrical. If the *Enterprise-C* simply flies back into it, it will certainly reemerge in the heat of its battle with the Romulans.

"Is there any possibility she could survive?" Picard asks thoughtfully.

Data's answer is a succinct "None, sir."

"Then sending them back would be a death sentence," Picard observes.

Convalescing in Sick Bay, Captain Garrett receives a report from Lt. Castillo, who has beamed over from the damaged *Enterprise* with Tasha Yar. Minimal shields and forward phasers have been restored. But photon torpedoes and warp drive remain inoperative.

Over Dr. Crusher's objections, Captain Garrett insists on resuming command of her ship. She beams over.

In the war room atmosphere of the Conference Lounge, Guinan confers with Picard. Picard testily informs Guinan that he cannot order the *Enterprise-C* back to its own time—and certain destruction—based solely on Guinan's unique, alien intuition.

"This war is not supposed to be happening," Guinan says. "You've got to send those people back to correct this."

But Picard is angry. There are no guarantees that this deadly return trip would change anything. It may be a futile gesture. Still, has Guinan ever done anything without sufficient reason?

Later, Guinan is tending bar at Ten-Forward when Tasha and Castillo walk in.

Tasha introduces Castillo to Guinan, but Guinan is noticeably wary of Tasha, hurrying away after taking their order.

"First time for everything," Tasha remarks. "It's just that I've never seen anything bother her before." Her increasingly intimate conversation with Castillo is soon interrupted by the Captain's summons to all senior officers.

Convening in the Ready Room, Picard explains that he's decided to send *Enterprise-C* back to her rightful time.

This is met by incredulous reactions and protests from his senior officers that Picard's decision would doom the crewmen of their long-lost sister ship and probably alter the past.

"We're talking about *restoring* the past," Picard argues. Their deaths defending the Klingon outpost may have meaning, especially to the Klingons who value such matters of honor. "Even their deaths could have prevented this war."

As the news sinks in, Picard presses on, saying that if the *Enterprise-C* somehow beats impossible odds and saves Narendra Three, their own time line, as well as the lost time line, will cease to exist. And a third alternative will be created.

"I've considered the alternatives," he gravely concludes. "I'll go with Guinan's recommendations. Dismissed."

Tasha reports to the *Enterprise-C* to help with repairs, while Picard briefs Captain Garrett on the terrible choice facing her. He reveals the war with the Klingon Empire is going so badly that Starfleet Command estimates the Federation may be only six months away from surrender. "One more ship will make no difference in the here and now," Picard says. "But 22 years ago, one ship could have stopped this war before it started."

Garrett considers this. Then, turning to her first officer, she says, "Mr. Castillo, inform the crew we're going back. The Romulans will get a good fight," she tells Picard. "We'll make it one for the history books."

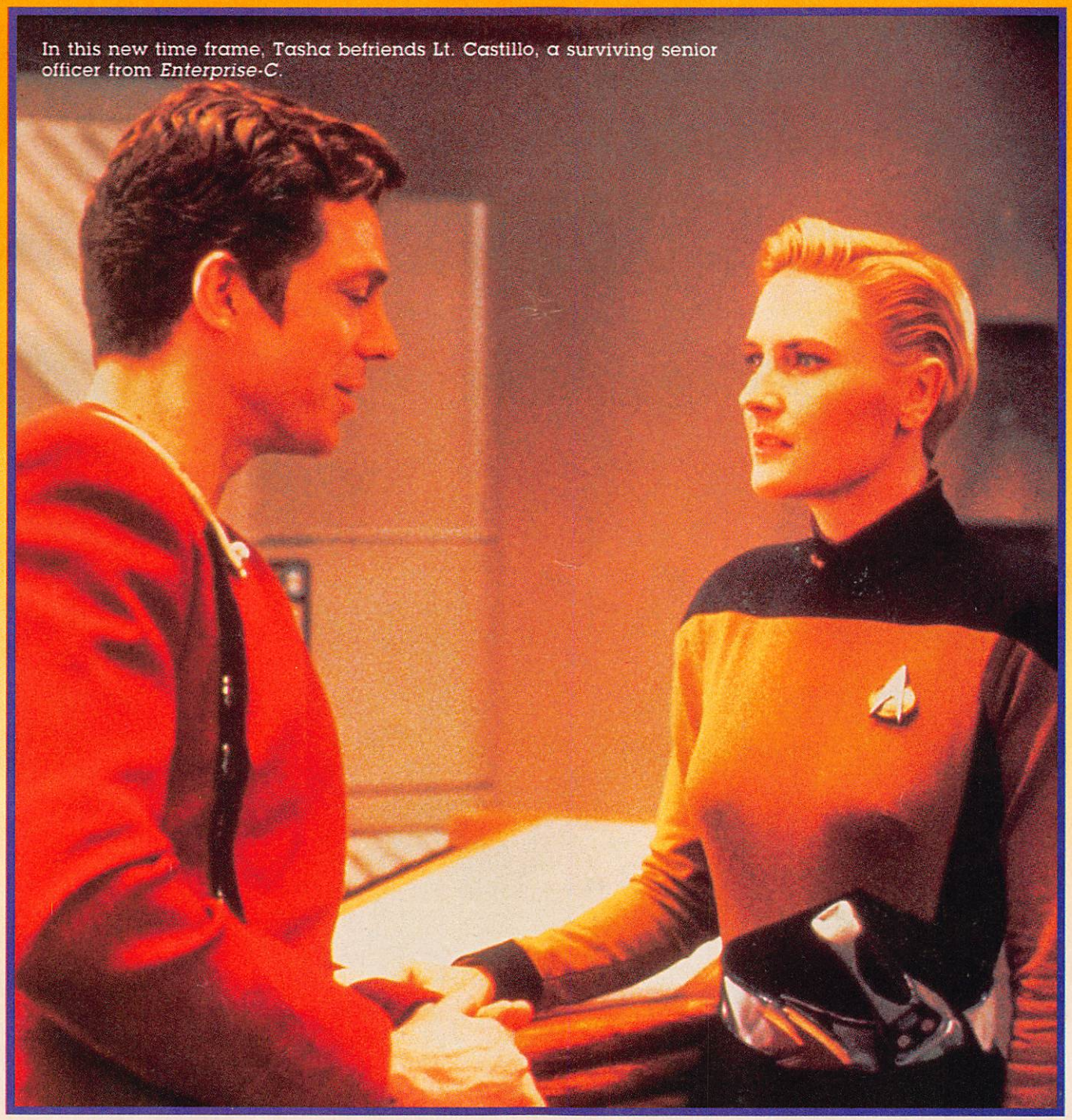
While Picard beams back, Tasha pauses for a wistful goodbye. It is interrupted by a massive explosion which rocks the *Enterprise-C*.

Both *Enterprises* go to Red Alert. It's a Klingon Bird of Prey. Making a second pass, it strikes the *Enterprise-C* again. Then, recloaking, it vanishes.

Picard requests a damage report from Captain Garrett. After a long pause, Tasha Yar reports bad news. Garrett is dead.

Data reports that the rift is growing unstable as a result of the Klingon action. It is closing.

In the *Enterprise-D* Conference Lounge, Lt. Richard Castillo reaffirms his intention as the new commander to return to his own time. Tasha escorts him to the Transporter Room, where their tentative farewell melts



In this new time frame, Tasha befriends Lt. Castillo, a surviving senior officer from *Enterprise-C*.

into a tender goodbye kiss.

"I wish we had more time," she says.

Castillo beams over. Tasha immediately goes to Ten-Forward to confront Guinan. "Guinan, I have to know something," Yar demands. "What happens to me in the other time line?" she demands.

Sadly, Guinan admits that Tasha doesn't belong here. She died in the other time line. "An empty death," Guinan says. "A death without purpose."

Rushing to Picard in the Ready Room, Tasha requests a transfer to the other *Enterprise*. Picard balks. Tasha pleads that the *Enterprise-C* needs her tactical skills to help them defend themselves.

"I'd like my death to count for something," she insists.

Over on the *Enterprise-C* Bridge, Castillo is overseeing final preparations for departure.

Suddenly, an officer interrupts. It's Tasha Yar, reporting for duty.

Shocked, Castillo nevertheless gratefully welcomes her aboard.

Later, repairs made, shields raised, the sister ships prepare to bid one another farewell.

At this critical point, three K'vort class Klingon battlecruisers uncloak. The *Enterprise-D* wheels to protect *Enterprise-C*, which is moving into the rift.

The Klingons open up with phaser fire, rocking the *Enterprise-D*. Picard orders photon torpedoes launched. And the battle is joined.

One enemy cruiser breaks off to pursue the *Enterprise-C*. *Enterprise-D* moves to intercept, taking fire and returning it. A Klingon cruiser erupts in a ball of plasma. Return fire from the surviving ships is ferocious.

Casualties mount. Geordi reports anti-matter containment fields are falling. Shields are close to their buckling point. Continuing phaser strikes inflict massive damage. Riker falls.

Captain Picard knows this is the end. When a Klingon voice demands he surrender his ship, he mutters, "That'll be the day," and takes over phaser controls from the dead Riker. Emitting murderous fire, the remaining ships converge on the *Enterprise-D* for the kill.

Then, the *Enterprise-C* enters the rift.

The Universe blinks so quickly no one notices it.

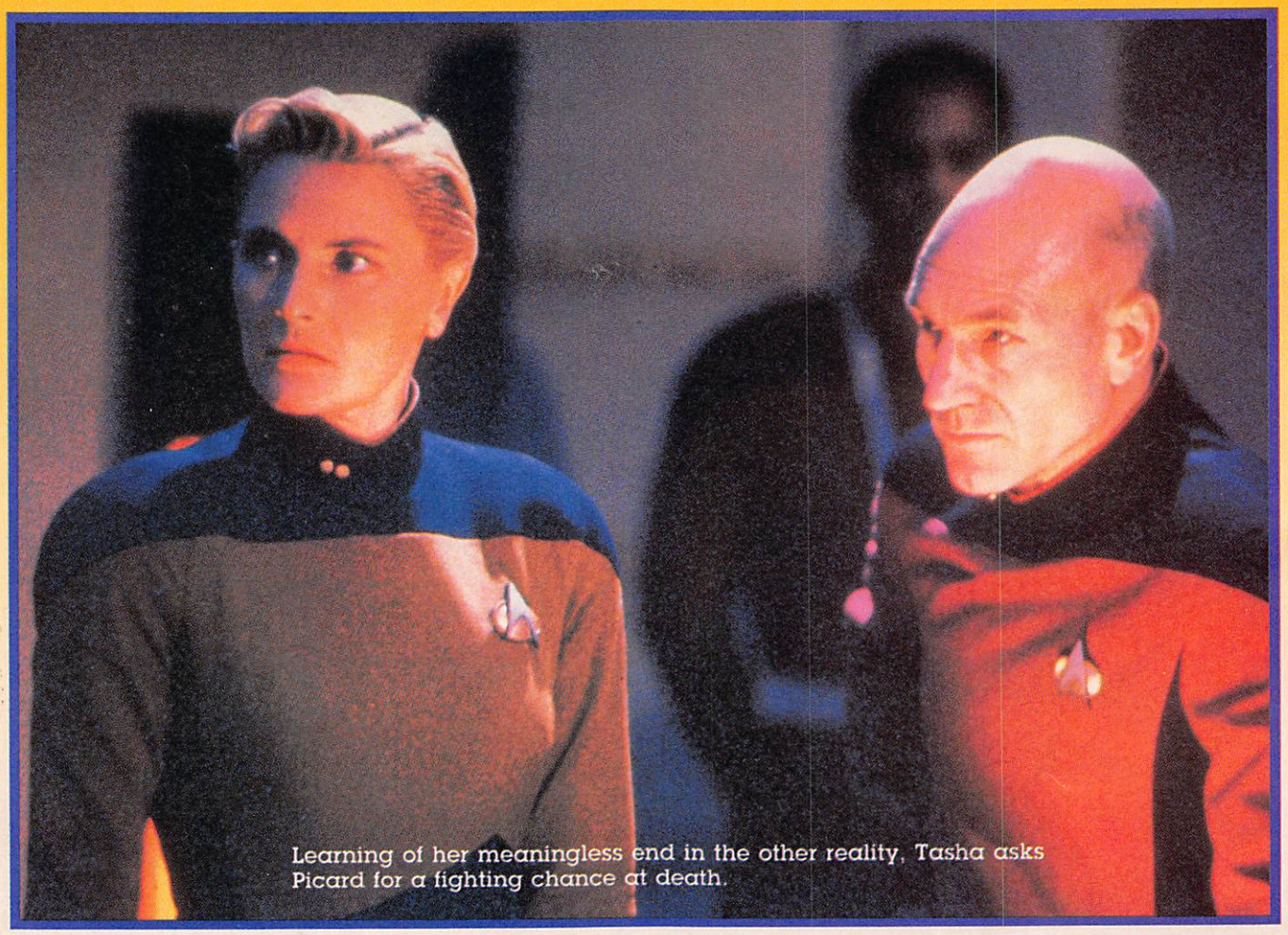
Picard turns to tactical, asking for a report. From his customary station, Lt. Worf reports something that appeared to be a vessel in the rift, but it is fading. Data adds that the rift is closing.

Picard, relaxed and once again in the familiar peacetime Federation uniform, orders a course laid in for Archer Four.

As the ship gets underway, Guinan's voice comes in over the com, asking if everything is all right. Puzzled, Picard replies that it is. "Is something wrong?"

"No," says Guinan. "Everything's fine."

Down in Ten-Forward, Guinan receives the news with a wistful smile. Taking a drink to Geordi, she says, "Geordi, tell me about...Tasha Yar." ●

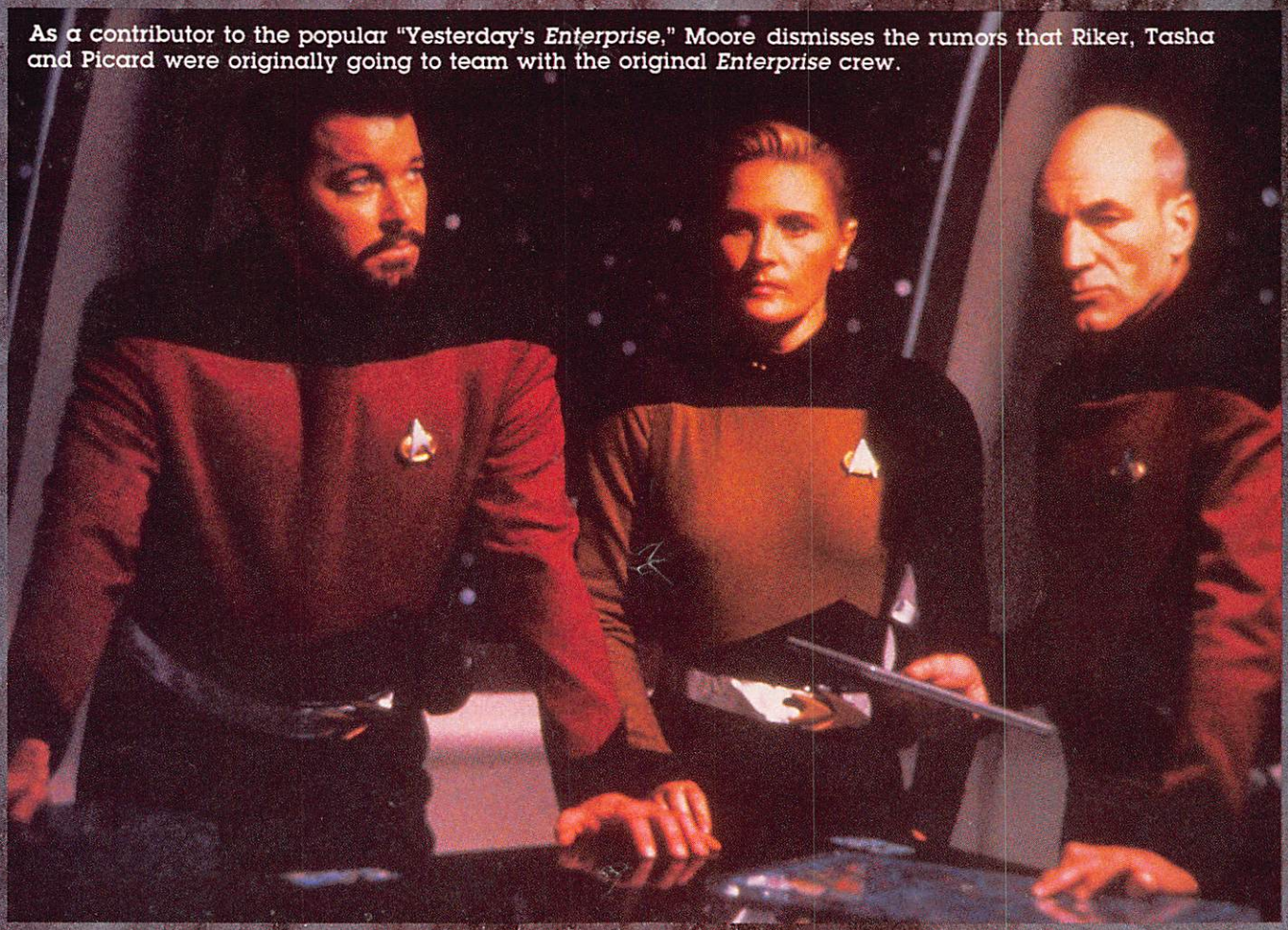


Learning of her meaningless end in the other reality, Tasha asks Picard for a fighting chance at death.

Ronald D. Moore

Yesterday's Fan

By MAURICE MOLYNEAUX



As a contributor to the popular "Yesterday's *Enterprise*," Moore dismisses the rumors that Riker, Tasha and Picard were originally going to team with the original *Enterprise* crew.

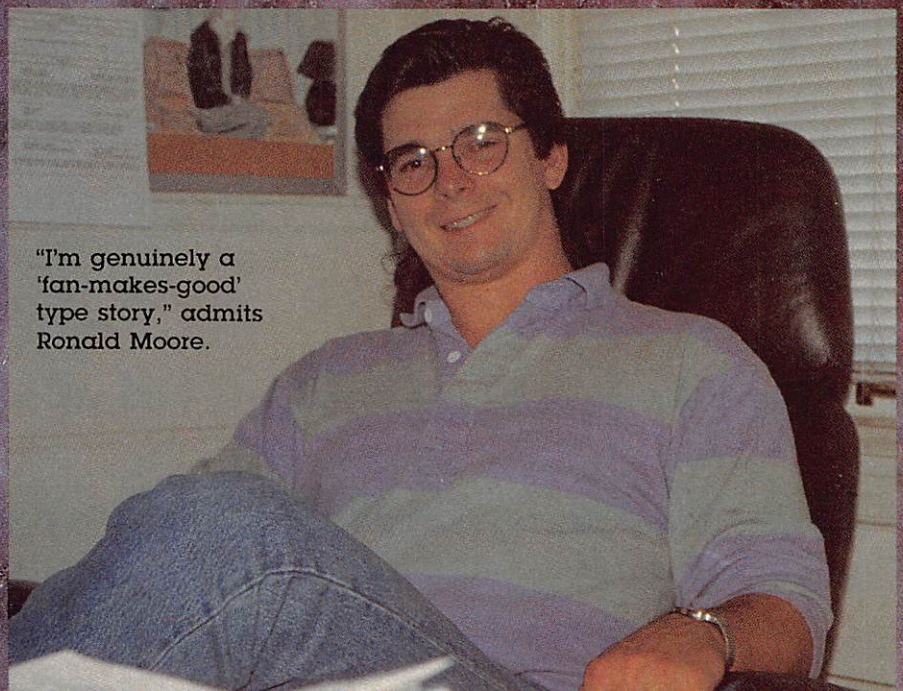


Photo: Maurice Molyneaux

"I'm genuinely a 'fan-makes-good' type story," admits Ronald Moore.

"There's a lot of rewriting, plain and simple, but it's a difficult show to write," states Ronald D. Moore. "Essentially, you're working in Gene Roddenberry's backyard. You know, he made it, he bought the property, he has cultivated the landscape, and now you're coming in to do some things."

Currently serving as Executive Story Editor on *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*, Moore comments on the restrictions of the show's format, and on its reputation for endlessly rewriting scripts.

"Too many of the shows that we get pitched and submitted are about *planets*, and they're not about our characters,"

Moore elaborates. "The *Enterprise* pulls up to the curb and the crew looks out at the planet and says, 'What a deep sociological and economic problem these folks have. Well, isn't that interesting? We'll be on our way now.' The story's not about *us*, it's about a race of Gulags. They have their Gulag problems and they run around killing each other, and, ultimately, Picard makes a big speech and they stop killing each other. But it's a big '*So what?*' to the *Enterprise* crew. That's the biggest problem that the outside writers have. This is about the *Enterprise* and our people, and about what we learn and what we do. That's the show.

"And some writers get rewritten heavily because they just don't know the show," he adds. "They had a nice story, but they don't know a Phaser from a Tricorder. You know...what can you do?"

Working on the staff of *THE NEXT GENERATION* is the last job Moore would have expected to find himself in only a few years ago. His career plans in college had nothing to do with writing or science fiction.

"I was in college on a Navy scholarship, and hopefully, I was going to go fly," Moore explains. "But on the side, I was writing and doing odd things with literary societies and stuff like that. And I never really seriously considered making it a career until I lost my scholarship during my senior year, because I have a knee injury and I failed the Navy physical."

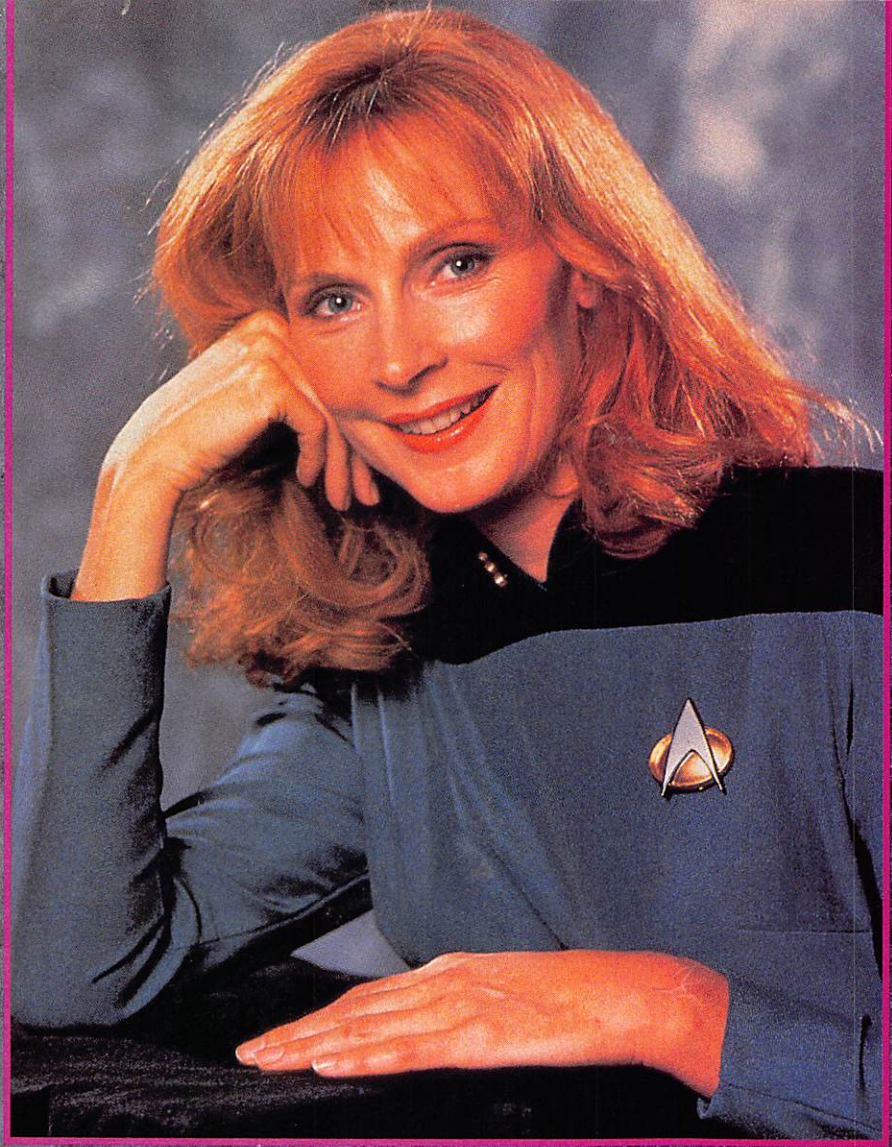
Moore left "Sins of the Father" very open-ended for Worf to follow up on this fourth season.

After college, Moore packed his bags, moved to Los Angeles, and decided to become a writer. But he didn't just walk into Paramount Pictures and take an office. He first worked at a series of jobs, ranging from receptionist at an animal hospital to working in international film distribution. Writing a *STAR TREK* script wasn't really on his list of priorities until he met his current girl friend.

"She did casting on the pilot for *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*. And when I met her, she said that she still knew somebody who might be able to maybe-kinda-sorta get me a set tour. And I swore to myself that if I got that close to it, I was going to have a script in hand. I always said I was going to write a *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION* script, because I knew it so well, but I had never really sat down and done it. Now, I had an immediate goal. I sat down and wrote 'The Bonding' in a month. Then, I tucked it under my little arm. Now, this violates *every* rule," he cautions. "You're *not* supposed to do this. It's *illegal*. You know, it's like, 'This is the *wrong* way to go about it.' I literally had to play a game and con somebody [on the show] to read it who wasn't supposed to do so. They read it, just to be nice, and they really liked it. But they couldn't submit it to the show because I didn't have an agent."

The unnamed friend introduced Moore to what became his first agent, and that agent submitted the script to the show. Over six months passed before the script reached co-executive producer Michael Piller's desk.

"[Then-story consultant] Melinda Snodgrass had read it, liked it and passed it on. Michael read it on a Monday, bought it, I believe, on the following Thursday, and then it was in



"At one point, ["The Defector"] was going to be primarily a Beverly Crusher love story," reveals Moore.

production two-and-a-half weeks later! It seemed like a long time coming, but then when it happened, it was really fast and furious.

"After I sold 'Bonding,' and before the show had even gone into production, they invited me in to pitch story ideas. So, I came in with about five or six. They weren't really interested in that batch, but they asked me to come back a second time. So, I came back and it was in that meeting that I pitched the idea for 'The Defector.' And they liked it. So, I was starting to work on 'The Defector' by the time 'Bonding' went into production. After 'Defector' got done, there was about two or three weeks of downtime where I quit my job and decided, 'OK, take the plunge. I've got the *STAR TREK* money and I'm going to concentrate on writing and I'll take my chances and see what happens.'

"I wasn't really counting on hearing from them again. And then they just called up and said, 'Can you come down tomorrow and work on the staff?' And I went, 'Well, I don't know. What are you going to pay?' *STAR TREK*? Do I really want to do this with my life? So, I hesitated for like five minutes...Not even that. Five *seconds*, and then leapt over the bodies of dying orphans and nuns and raced into the studio! The next day, I had my little office and I was a staff writer. They brought me on and made me permanent, and I became Story Editor just after Christmas '89." Moore was then promoted to Executive Story Editor for the fourth season.

"I'm genuinely a 'fan makes good' type story," Moore states. "I was *deep* into *STAR TREK* as a kid. I just loved the show. It was a genuine part of my childhood. These characters, Kirk, Spock and the *Enterprise*, they were my friends, and they were things I was very comfortable with. And I remember distinctly buying my first STARLOG magazine. It was issue #3. I can still remember the cover and the whole bit. That was the introduction that said, 'Hey, there's somebody else out there too!' It was just like a theme throughout my whole childhood.

"If you told me two years ago, five years ago, 10 years ago, that I would be sitting here working on *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*, I just wouldn't have believed it. It's amazing. There's a model of the *Enterprise* that I built when I was 12 or 13, and now it sits in my office at *Paramount*. Some days I just can't believe it."

To date, Moore has written three original teleplays for *THE NEXT GENERATION*, and contributed to several others. "The Bonding" developed primarily because Moore felt the issues of bringing families on the *Enterprise* hadn't been properly addressed.

"They never show us the problems associated with having kids on board the *Enterprise*. And so I thought, well, what happens when a single parent dies and you have this kid left over? Who tells him? What happens to that kid? What are the processes of helping someone like that deal with grief? And that's where 'The Bonding' came from.

"As I got into it in the original draft, Jeremy, the child, went down to the Holodeck and recreated his mother himself, instead of the aliens doing it," Moore explains. "The aliens became involved later, but I also wanted to show the danger of the Holodeck. They decided not to go that way in the final draft, and I understood the reasons why. It made for a stronger dramatic line and it didn't muddy up the issue."

Next up was "The Defector," which tells the story of a Romulan who gives up every-

thing to stop a war he believes is about to break out.

"The pitch for 'The Defector' was that a Romulan comes across the Neutral Zone, and it looks like he's a defector, and he tells us something that, if we believe him, compels us to go across the Neutral Zone in violation of the treaty. And we have to figure out, 'Do we believe this guy? Is he a plant? Is he real? What if we go across and it causes a war?' It was just a two-line pitch.

"'Defector' changed a great deal through the development. It went in different directions and came back. At one point, it was going to be primarily a Beverly Crusher love story," Moore reveals. "It was going to be Beverly and the Romulan. There's one scene left over from that idea where he's in Sick Bay and she's working on his shoulder or something, and that was going to be the beginning of their love affair. It just didn't make it to the script. At one point, I remember I got this memo from someone that said, 'I like this story a lot, and it's really interesting, but what if we got rid of the defector?' And I was like, '*What*?' What do you mean, "Get rid of the defector"? What's left?' So, fortunately, we didn't follow up on that!

Once on the show's writing staff, Moore rewrote and had input into a number of other scripts, including "Yesterday's *Enterprise*." That episode has been the subject of many rumors, the most interesting of which is the suggestion that the time-travel tale was originally supposed to feature the movie *Enterprise* coming into the future, not the *1701-C*.

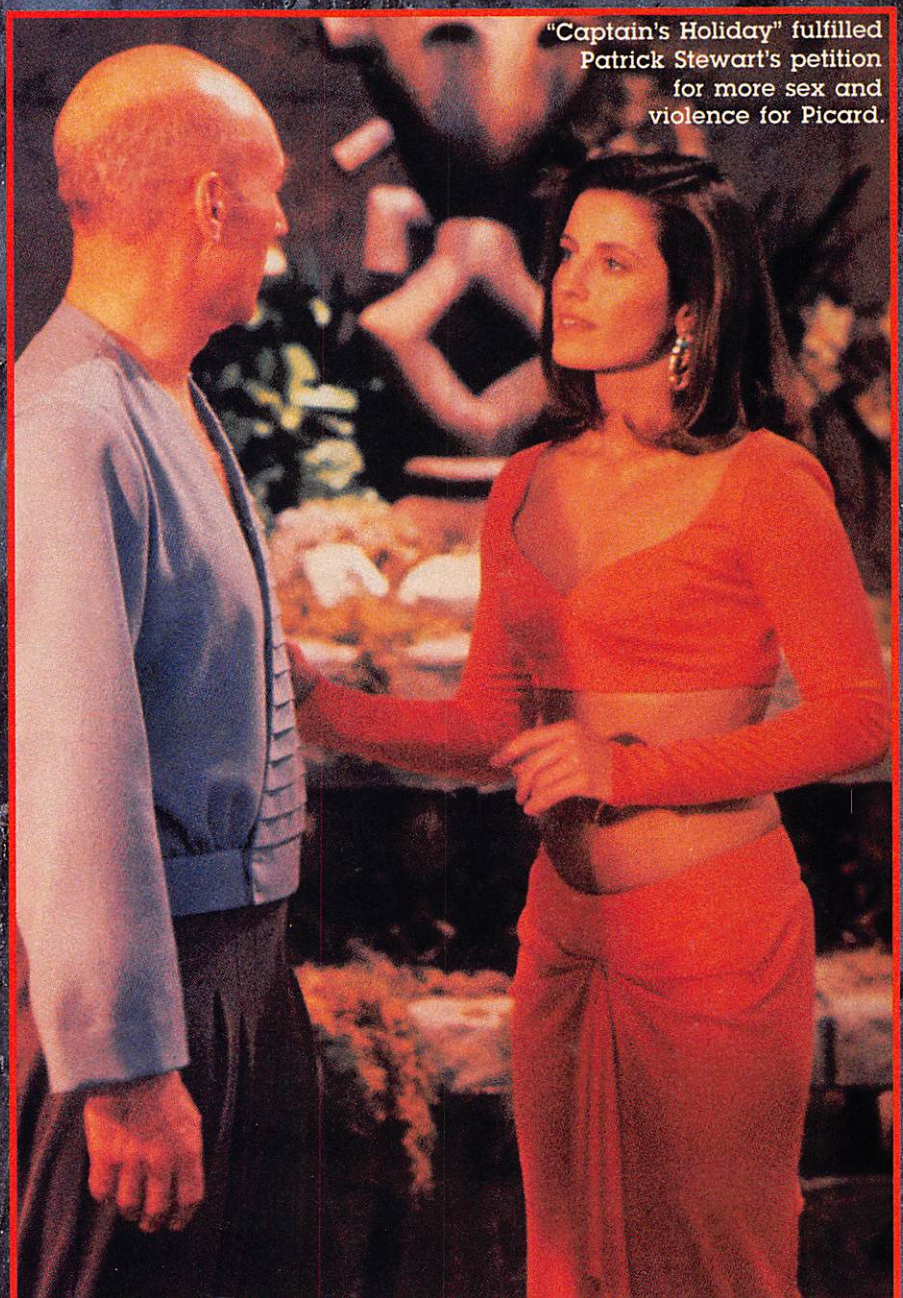
"Never," Moore denies. "It was never even in the early, primeval draft of that. It didn't even have Tasha Yar as part of the original thing way back when Eric Stillwell and Trent Ganino wrote it. It was always the *Enterprise C*. It was always a different crew. It was *never* the original series crew.

"Everybody on the Bridge was going to *die* at the end of 'Yesterday's *Enterprise*,'" Moore adds with obvious pleasure. "*Everybody*, except Picard. And they were all going to die screaming, horrible, painful deaths. It was going to be almost like the beginning of *STAR TREK II: THE WRATH OF KHAN*. Data is electrocuted and I think Wesley's head was blown off. Riker's throat was cut—and that made it in. And eventually they had to cut that back because of money and time."

One script that Moore did extensive revision work on was "Sins of the Father," where Worf withdraws from defending his family honor when doing so would undermine the Klingon Empire. The ending, controversial among many fans, was something that Moore fought to keep.

"I *loved* the ending of that show. I wanted Worf to take it on the chin, stand up and take his punishment for Klingon king and country and for his brother. And that was *very* crucial, and so, I felt very happy that that survived, and I was overall very pleased with that show.

"It's kind of confusing," Moore admits, "because in the previous scene, he says 'discommendation,' and no one knows what the hell this means. Then, we cut to this Klingon scene, and I wished they had subtitled it, but basically, Worf says, 'I fear the judgment of the Council.' He's withdrawing the whole bit, but he's doing it in public. And K'mpec calls him a coward in Klingonese, and they



"Captain's Holiday" fulfilled Patrick Stewart's petition for more sex and violence for Picard.

The true meaning of "discommendation," Moore explains, is that K'mpec has called Worf a coward for withdrawing his challenge to the Council.

all turn their backs on him. And that moment when they're all turned away, and his brother turns too, and Worf and Picard walk out together, bowed but not beaten, I *love* that! I think that's one of the best sequences that we shot of my stuff.

"I would like to see more shows like 'Sins of the Father,' where we took a character on a road that you didn't really expect, and at the show's end, left him in a different place. And more quiet, introspective shows, like 'Sarek.' 'Sarek' was interesting because it was just two characters in conflict with each other. Here was a respected, venerated figure in our *TREK* lore, and he had a problem. And it wasn't a problem where we were going to give him a hypo and solve it by the show's end. Those episodes appeal to me a lot."

On a daily basis, the job of a staff writer entails more than just staring into space and conjuring up strange new worlds.

"I'm working, probably, on a story of my own, and trying to figure where that falls in the schedule," says Moore. "If the immediate concern is next week's show, I'm probably doing rewrites on that or a first draft. And intersprinkled through all that there's still a lot of pitches to come in, stories to read, and other people's stories that you have to sit down and break. A big chunk of the job is sitting with the rest of the staff and breaking the stories together, which is basically taking the story outline, using one of these big white boards, breaking it down into five acts, deciding what the beats are within each act, and locking the structure in. And once the staff agrees on the show's structure, then you give it to the writer to go off and write the teleplay.

"My immediate 'boss,' or person that I work under a lot is Michael Piller, the co-executive producer. He's the one in charge of the writing staff, so he's my point of contact, and the one that I go through a lot. I also work with Rick Berman, the executive producer. I deal with him about once a week, maybe twice. And, beyond that, I just work with whoever the other writers are. Last year, it was Ira [Steven Behr], Hans [Beimler], Richard [Manning] and Melinda [Snodgrass].

"They all had something to teach me," Moore explains. "It wasn't a formal, 'Today we will teach you, Ron, the essence of writing.' But being around them, talking with them, and arguing story points and working through the scripts, I learned a lot. It was a crash course in writing, and from them, I learned a tremendous amount about structure, how to do things, and what not to do. It was a big, big eye-opening experience."

Currently, Moore is busy working on scripts for the fourth season of *THE NEXT GENERATION*, but aside from denying that there are any earth-shattering changes in store and admitting that he is working on "a big Picard story," he can reveal little at this point.

"You're going to see some interesting shows. There are some shows that we are doing that are genuinely *very* different for *STAR TREK*. There are some things about people's backgrounds and about their futures, and there's some really interesting character stuff. And there are a couple of stylistic shows that are really off-format. So, it's a fun season."

STAR TREK's popularity ar loyal following is legendary, and *THE NEXT GENERATION*'s success (it is the top-rated hour-long syndicated program in the U.S.) testifies to its basic appeal. The long-term success of *STAR TREK* serves as direct contrast to scores of other science fiction and fantasy series that have fallen by the wayside over the years.

"They get into 'format lock,'" Moore says, explaining why he thinks *STAR TREK* succeeds where others routinely fail. "They just sit there and do formula week after week. 'OK, we're stuck on the planet, and we still can't get off and find Alpha Centauri, and oh no, there's the big red thing that talks like a space pirate and is going after Dr. Smith.' And the stories where they're helpless like...even *Battlestar Galactica* was sort of, 'Oh, God, the *victims*!' You know, they're running away. And *Space: 1999*, with the Moon careening through space, and they run into things along the way. And they just *bump* into planets, and they *bump* into these other guys and they're just sort of, ho-hum, tripping merrily through the universe. I think it gives a different flavor to the show than if you're '*boldly going*' and you're *seeking out* adventure. There's that sense of the unknown and of exploring, of being pioneers."

Comparing *STAR TREK* to other shows is one thing, but comparing *THE NEXT GENERATION* to the original saga is something Moore feels is like considering apples and oranges.

"I have a very strong feeling for the old show. And I can watch the worst episodes of the original series and I can still connect with those characters and just feel that *friendship* that I had as a kid. There's something about 'Kirk to *Enterprise*' and 'Mr. Spock' and stuff that is just gonna hit you on a...hits *me* on a visceral level, and it's hard to step back from that. I mean, I can criticize it on technical things.

"*NEXT GENERATION* is different. It has taken that universe and extrapolated on it, improved on it, and is telling different sorts of stories. It's not so focused on, you know, Kirk running and jumping and sleeping with women, and many other staples of the original show. I think there's more room to do things in *THE NEXT GENERATION* that you *couldn't* do in the original series. There's more opportunity for quieter, more introspective shows. 'Sarek' is a good show that's just a character show, between two people in conflict without any bogus alien jeopardy or anything.

The writer planned a horrible death for everyone, save Picard, aboard "Yesterday's *Enterprise*." Wesley's head was to be blown up.

"And I do like *THE NEXT GENERATION*. I think it stands on its own. I appreciate it and I think it's good. Is one better than the other? I don't think you can make that comparison. One's a bit of Americana. 'Kirk and Spock.' You say those names and they mean so much more than just the simple, you know, 'What is Corbin Bernsen's role on *LA Law*?' thing. There's a larger-than-life aspect to it that is an unfair and unequal comparison to *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*."

For Moore, his most memorable moment on *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION* came on the set. "I went to see 'The Bonding' shoot. I was pointed out to Patrick Stewart. Patrick walked right up to me and stuck out his hand. We chatted for a few minutes, and he said, 'So, are you going to be doing anything else for us?' I said, 'Yes. As a matter of fact, I'm working on another show with a defector and some Romulans, and it'll be more of an action show.' And he said, 'Hmmm. Just keep in mind that the Captain doesn't get nearly enough sex and shooting,' and then he turned on his heel and walked away. I just looked at him and started laughing. It was such a priceless moment."

That wasn't the end of the story, however, because Moore remembered Stewart's comment when working on the episode "Captain's Holiday."

"We talked about it on the staff. I told them that story and we kept it in mind and serviced *both* of the actor's demands." ●

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STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

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Based on STAR TREK created by GENE RODDENBERRY
Synopsis for STARLOG by ROBERT GREENBERGER

MISSION REPORT

As the *U.S.S. Enterprise* arrives at sector 396 to chart the Celebi asteroid belt, Commander Geordi La Forge, Counselor Deanna Troi and Ensign Wesley Crusher head toward Lt. Commander Data's lab.

Geordi notes that ever since Data returned from a cybernetics conference, he has spent a great deal of time working on a project there. Wesley admits that he's tried to peek in, but Data is being unusually secretive and cautious. Geordi rings the door chime and after a moment, the door slides open. To everyone's surprise, Data's holding a foot. The android remarks that his friends are early and he will be with them shortly. With that, the door slides closed.

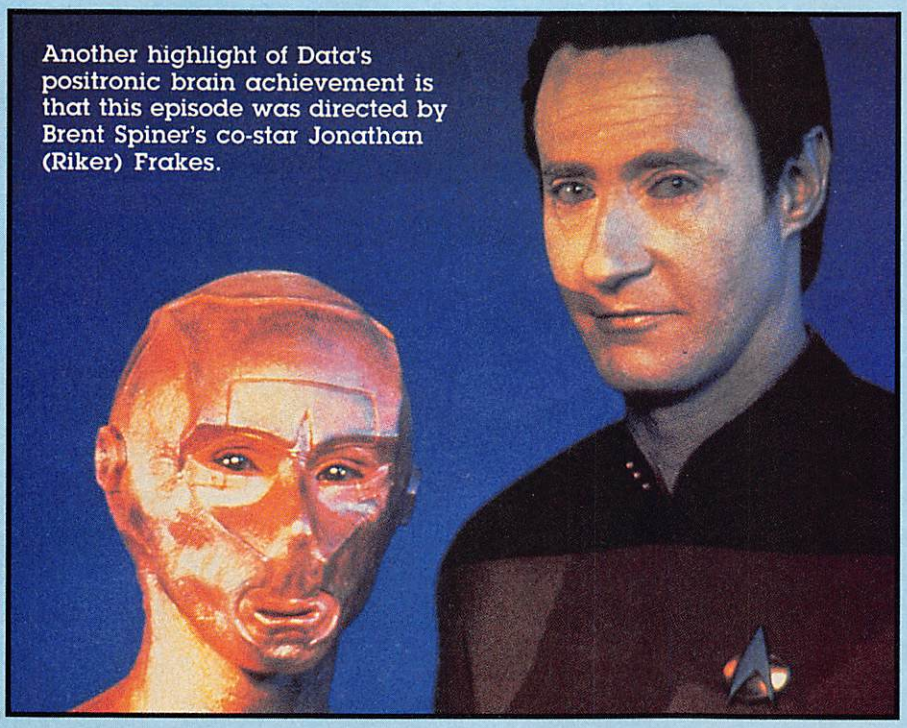
Inside, Data attaches the foot to a construct and raises the platform out of sight. The three enter. "I have invited you here to meet someone," Data says. He then introduces an asexual android named Lal. When the android speaks, it refers to Data as father, which surprises everyone.

"Data, it called you father," Wes says.

"Yes, Wesley," Data announces. "Lal is my child."

A short time later, Captain Jean-Luc Picard enters the lab and inspects Data's creation. Data explains that he has constructed a positronic brain similar to his own. At the conference, a new submicron matrix-transfer technology was introduced, which Data concluded would enable him to create his own "child." He has used the new technology to transfer his own neural net patterns to Lal, literally making it his offspring. After starting on the brain at the conference, Data decided to

At last, Data can duplicate Dr. Soong's work. Lal is the result.



Another highlight of Data's positronic brain achievement is that this episode was directed by Brent Spiner's co-star Jonathan (Riker) Frakes.

continue his work aboard the *Enterprise*.

Picard is somewhat displeased that Data did not consult with him about the project, but his Science Officer counters that his work is literally procreation, not usually discussed with one's Captain. Troi wonders why the android doesn't look human, and Data replies that he wants Lal to make the choice as to its own image.

Still disturbed by Data's work, Picard later meets with him and they discuss the ramifications, especially once Starfleet learns of Lal.

"Do you wish me to deactivate Lal?" Data asks.

"It's a life, Data!" Picard exclaims. "It cannot be activated or de-activated simply! This is a most...stupendous undertaking."

Picard studies the android crewman and says quietly, "You've taken on quite a responsibility, Data."

A little later, Troi accompanies Lal and Data to the Holodeck where the computer assists them in selecting the proper gender and physical makeup out of every type found in explored space. Given that the choices are several thousand in number, it is no surprise that Troi falls asleep during the studies. Data wakes her up to study the four final options. Troi watches in fascination as the computers show her Lal as an Andorian female, a human male, a human female and a Klingon male. Troi comments along the way, showing a preference for the human female. "Yes, I have chosen," Lal says at last.

"Congratulations, Data," says Troi. "It's a girl."

In the laboratory one day, Wesley watches Data work on Lal and asks how she spends her time when he is on duty. Data replies that Lal studies by herself in their quarters since she is fairly self-sufficient. The young Ensign suggests, instead, that Lal expose herself to others through the ship's school.

Lal, completing her third crosslink transfer, seems more lifelike and asks, "Father, what is my purpose?"

"That is a complex question, Lal. I can only begin to answer by telling you that our function is to contribute in a positive way to the world in which we live."

"Why am I me instead of someone else?"

"Because you are my child."

Meanwhile, Captain Picard finds himself with a more one-sided debate as he addresses Admiral Anthony Haftel at Galor Four. Haftel wants Lal on the planet for studies, away from Data's influence. The Admiral sees Lal only as an object, Picard notes, while to everyone aboard the *Enterprise*, Lal is a fellow life form.

The following day, Data meets with Lt. Ballard, one of the ship's teachers, who explains that since Lal scored perfectly on an academic achievement test, she was placed with older children. But it quickly became obvious she didn't know how to behave with them, so Lal was placed with the younger children. This didn't work either, Data learns, since the children were afraid of her and, in turn, laughed at her attempts at interaction.

At a loss on how to explain this to Lal, Data turns to Dr. Crusher for advice, as a "successful parent." Crusher is sympathetic to Data as he strives to find a way to help Lal fit in. Crusher suggests showing Lal that Data too went through the same difficult situation.

"Just help her realize she is not alone," Crusher says. "Be there to nurture her when she needs love and attention."

"I can give her attention, Doctor," Data replies, "but I am incapable of giving her love."

Data leaves and Crusher smiles. "Now, why do I find that so hard to believe?"

In Ten-Forward, hub of all social activity aboard the *Enterprise*, the delightful yet enigmatic Guinan finds herself talking with Data and Lal. Data is proposing that Lal help Guinan in exchange for the chance to observe human behavior. Guinan accepts the idea and begins chatting with Lal. During the conversation, Lal uses a verbal contraction which both Guinan and Data notice immediately. She has surpassed Data's own programming abilities. Just then, Data is summoned to Picard's Ready Room.

While not pleased with his task, Picard gently explains to Data that Haftel is coming and will probably want to take Lal with him for better supervision. Data does not understand how Haftel or the Daystrom Annex on Galor Four would be better for her or more experienced than himself. "I am forced to wonder

how much experience he had as a parent when his first child was born," Data comments.

In Ten-Forward, Lal watches people relax with friends or colleagues and takes special notice of simple flirtation between men and women. Guinan explains a little, but defers the full discussion of sex to Data. Instead, she gives Lal just enough information for her to understand the beginning of human mating habits. Just returning to the *Enterprise* after an extended personal leave, Commander Riker steps in, spots Lal at the bar and smiles. She smiles back and accepting the signal, he asks if she's new. Suddenly, she plants a deep, energetic kiss on his mouth. Data arrives on the scene. "Commander, what are your intentions toward my daughter?" Data asks.

"Your daughter?" Riker asks. "Nice to meetcha," he mumbles and hurries out of Ten-Forward.

Back in their quarters, Lal continues to try to understand why Data tries to emulate humans. He explains about how they should strive to be better than they are and that "the effort yields its own rewards. It is the difference between knowledge and experience." In return, she shows him that she has learned that people who care for one another hold hands. And they do.

Picard expected Haftel to be difficult, but it never occurred to him that Haftel would remain closed-minded to the situation at hand. To Haftel, Lal is merely a construct that needs *his* supervision and any discussion of her being an android's child is simply wishful thinking, a "sentimental attitude."

Asking to see Lal, Haftel is brought to Ten-Forward where his surprise turns to anger. "She's capable of running over 60 trillion calculations a second and you have her working as a cocktail waitress!?" he snaps. He demands an interview with Data's creation.

There, under Picard's watchful gaze, Haftel tries to sweet talk Lal into accepting an "invitation" to Galor Four.

Captain Picard pointedly asks Lal what *she* wants and the answer is no surprise: to remain aboard the *Enterprise*.

While waiting for Data to arrive for the next phase, Lal is dismissed. She seeks out Counselor Troi. Lal comes in, quite agitated. "An admiral from Starfleet has come to take me away," she says. "I am scared." To Troi's great shock, her Betazed powers do detect genuine fear from the android.

Data arrives and the debate with the rigid Haftel continues. He tries to reason with Data about the benefits of having Lal study on Galor Four, but Data continues to counter with arguments involving family,

Admiral Haftel has arrived on the *Enterprise* to take Data's offspring away, but Picard will not hear of a man turning "his child to the state."

arguments Haftel rejects as irrelevant. Finally, despite Data's points, Haftel orders Data to release Lal to Starfleet. As Data rises to comply, Picard suddenly countermands. Haftel tries to pull rank, threatening Picard's career, but Picard will have none of it and says, "There are times, sir, when men of good conscience cannot blindly follow orders. You acknowledge their sentience, but ignore their personal liberties and freedom. Order a man to turn his child over to the state? Not while I'm his Captain."

Before the discussion can continue, Troi summons Data to the lab. All three officers rush to the lab where they find Lal in a deteriorated state. Troi explains that after her outburst, which registered genuine emotion, Lal left her quarters for the lab. Data confirms that her programming instructed Lal to do so in case of malfunction. He quickly scans readouts and announces work must be done on her basic programming to save her. Haftel, surprisingly, offers to assist.

Hours later, Wesley, Geordi and Troi have been waiting by the lab door. Haftel comes out and says, "She won't survive much longer." He shows great admiration for Data's skills, remarking that his android hands move faster than Haftel could see. However, all the systems continued to collapse. "It just wasn't meant to be," Haftel concludes sadly.

Inside, Data and Lal share final moments. They acknowledge her passing, but Lal continues to display emotional awareness by declaring, "I love you, father." When Data says he cannot feel the same thing, she replies, "I...will..feel...it...for... both...of... us. Thank you for my life. Flirting ...laughter...painting...family...female...human."

Back on the Bridge, Data formally announces Lal's complete neural system failure at 1300 hours. After Picard extends his condolences, Data says that Lal so enriched his life that he transferred her memories into his databanks. So, in a sense, she lives on, as a part of Data.

Taking his seat, Data returns to duty. But there is something somehow different about him. The memory of Lal. ●

The admiral's presence has caused a response in Lal that Data could not have anticipated—*fear*.

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Based on STAR TREK created by GENE RODDENBERRY
Synopsis for STARLOG by PATRICK DANIEL O'NEILL

MISSION REPORT

K'mpec heads the Klingon Council that has branded Worf's father, Mogh, a traitor to the Empire.

As a part of the continuing exchange of officers between the Federation and Klingon Empire, the *Enterprise* accepts a temporary first officer, Commander Kurn. He quickly makes his command style apparent—he is sharp, hard and demanding, everything you would expect a Klingon officer to be.

Geordi and Wes take their problems to the temporarily-displaced Riker. "He pulled a surprise inspection in the middle of a maintenance cycle!" the Engineering Chief exclaims. "I tried to explain it to him, but..."

"He wouldn't listen," Riker completes the sentence. "His style of command is just different. Klingons believe in obedience and a strict formality of command."

"Kurn's leaning into everybody pretty hard except..." says Wesley.

"Except the one guy who wouldn't really mind it..." Geordi notes.

All three know who: Worf. Kurn has been treating the Security Officer in an extremely gentle, un-Klingon manner. And Worf is seething about it. Finally, he confronts Kurn in his quarters. "I wish to know if I have given you offense," he asks.

"I am *not* a human," Kurn responds. "If you had given offense, you would not need to ask."

"Yet you dishonor me at every opportunity," Worf says.

Kurn replies, "I did not know that being polite to a Starfleet officer would bring dishonor on him."

"I am a Klingon," Worf answers, tightly.

"Really? Perhaps your blood has thinned in this environment," Kurn goes on. "I simply didn't want to...hurt you."

That's too much for Worf. He snarls in rage and moves to attack Kurn. After a moment, the first officer calls, "*Mev yap!* [Enough!] That is the response of a Klingon. The response I would expect from my *older* brother."

Kurn explains that not all of Worf's family had accompanied his parents to Khitomer. Left behind with a family friend, Lorgh, Kurn survived the Romulan attack that destroyed the outpost, and was adopted by Lorgh's family. No one knows of his relationship to Worf. He goes on to tell of his *real* reason for being on the *Enterprise*. "The Klingon High Council has judged our father a traitor to the Empire." And Worf must participate in a challenge to clear the family name—and if he loses, he will be executed.

Apparently, the council now believes that Mogh, Worf's father, aided and abetted the Romulan attack on Khitomer. Informed of this and the challenge, Picard immediately orders the ship to proceed to the Klingon First City.

Since Worf will be unable to participate in combat under the rules of the challenge, he asks Kurn to act as his champion, his *cha'DIch*. And he requests that Kurn keep his true parentage a secret. Kurn agrees.

A short time later, Picard and Riker accompany the two Klingons to the Council chamber, and stand before the Council, including K'mpec, its head. Duras, who has brought the charges, outlines his case. "For many turns, the truth about Khitomer has lain dormant...unknown. Now the truth is revealed. The traitor, Mogh, sent the defense access code to the Romulan patrol ships, allowing them to destroy the outpost.

"Thousands died on Khitomer...my father died on Khitomer. Their deaths *must* be avenged!"

Duras turns on Worf. "Your father was a traitor! By posing this challenge, *you* are also a traitor!" He tears the sash from Worf's chest. "You will not wear the emblems of our people!"

Worf has come to challenge the Council and *death*.

Sensing that this is highly personal to Worf, Picard and Riker return to the *Enterprise*. Once there, the Captain orders Data to access the Klingon information net, the records of the *Intrepid*, the ship closest to Khitomer on the day of the attack, and any other records which might be of help.

Back on the planet, during a recess, K'mpec speaks to Worf. "You should not have brought the challenge. There was no risk to you," he advises. "Your life in the Federation would not be affected by this judgment."

"My father..." Worf begins.

"Is dead," K'mpec completes the thought. "This is not how I wanted to remember him. We must let the past be and protect what we have now. Return to your ship, go back to your life. The challenge will be forgotten."

Worf refuses.

When his brother Kurn is struck down, Worf selects Picard to stand by him as the *cha'DIch*.

Meanwhile, Kurn and Duras meet in a tunnel in the city. Duras reveals that he knows Kurn's secret—that he, too, is a son of Mogh. He urges Kurn to resign as Worf's *cha'DIch*.

"He is my brother. I will not betray him!" Kurn declares.

"Then, you will die for him." And Duras signals a team of assassins to attack. Kurn fights them off but is seriously wounded.

Back on the *Enterprise*, Data has discovered the source of the charges against Mogh. "The Klingons recently captured a Romulan ship with logs that provided new information on the Khitomer attack," he tells Geordi. "They clearly indicate a transmission from the outpost to the Romulan ship moments before the shields dropped." And the data includes Mogh's personal security code.

As a check, Geordi compares the time codes of the Romulan log against that of the *Intrepid*. They match—until the moment of the subject transmission, a time when the *Intrepid* was unable to scan the outpost. "Somebody has been rewriting history," Geordi observes.

Meanwhile, Worf informs Picard of his conversation with K'mpec. "Obviously, they did not expect and never wanted this challenge," Picard notes. "You're getting close to something, Lieutenant, something they care a great deal about protecting."

"If it is true, it is not just Duras but the High Council itself that is my enemy," Worf replies. He then asks Picard to replace Kurn as *cha'DIch*.

In perfect Klingon, Picard answers. "*jIlajneS. ghIj qet jaghmeyjaj*. I accept."

As they return to the city for the challenge, a new discovery is made: Worf was not the only survivor of Khitomer. His nurse, Kahlest, still lives. Informed of this, Picard calls for a recess and tells Worf he will seek her out. "It is too dangerous," Worf protests. "You must not go alone."

"Hey, I'm your *cha'DIch*!" Picard responds and leaves on his mission.

Finding Kahlest in a poor section of the city, Picard presses her on Mogh's actions on Khitomer. "Mogh was loyal to the Emperor," she says. "Mogh suspected someone of plotting with the Romulans and followed them to Khitomer." But since she has no knowledge of the security codes or who could have used them, Picard departs.

Immediately outside, he is set upon by the assassins of Duras. Picard is rescued by Kahlest. Realizing that the Council can

have no idea what testimony she might give, Picard decides her presence alone could shift the balance in Worf's favor. She agrees to accompany him to the Council chamber.

They arrive just as the sentence is to be pronounced. K'mpec immediately calls for a recess and gathers the participants in his chambers. Duras threatens Kahlest with death if she speaks. "Be silent, Duras," K'mpec orders. "Would you kill an old women to cover your dishonor?"

A light dawns in Picard. "Yes, it is *your* dishonor we are protecting here, isn't it, Duras?"

Dismissing Kahlest, K'mpec at last explains. "The warriors who captured the Romulan ship had learned of the treachery. But only the Council knew whose security code had been transmitted—Ja'rod, father of Duras.

"His family is powerful," K'mpec continues. "If the truth were known, it would shatter the Council...most certainly plunge us into civil war."

He turns to Worf. "You were in Starfleet. We did not expect you to challenge the judgment."

Picard declares Worf's challenge successful, but K'mpec objects. "You will not be allowed to present this evidence. The judgment stands. You will be condemned...as will your brother," he tells Worf.

But, Picard refuses to turn either Worf or Kurn over for execution. K'mpec says that refusal could make "the alliance with the Federation fall to dust."

"The alliance is not based on lies!" Picard protests. "Protect your secrets if you must, but you will not sacrifice these men."

Worf offers a compromise. "If you allow Kurn to live, I will give you something that will serve your purpose far more than my death," Worf remarks. "I will accept...discommendation."

"Your heart is Klingon," K'mpec responds. "What has been said here will never be spoken of again."

Worf turns to Duras. "You...are the son of a traitor," he says, making Duras flinch. "Now, I am ready."

Outside K'mpec's chambers, they are joined by Kurn. Picard explains the situation. "Worf wants you to live," he says. "The name of your father must someday be cleared. He needs you alive...with your honor intact."

"But to do this?"

"There will be another day, Commander. Do not forget what he does here today. Do not let your children forget."

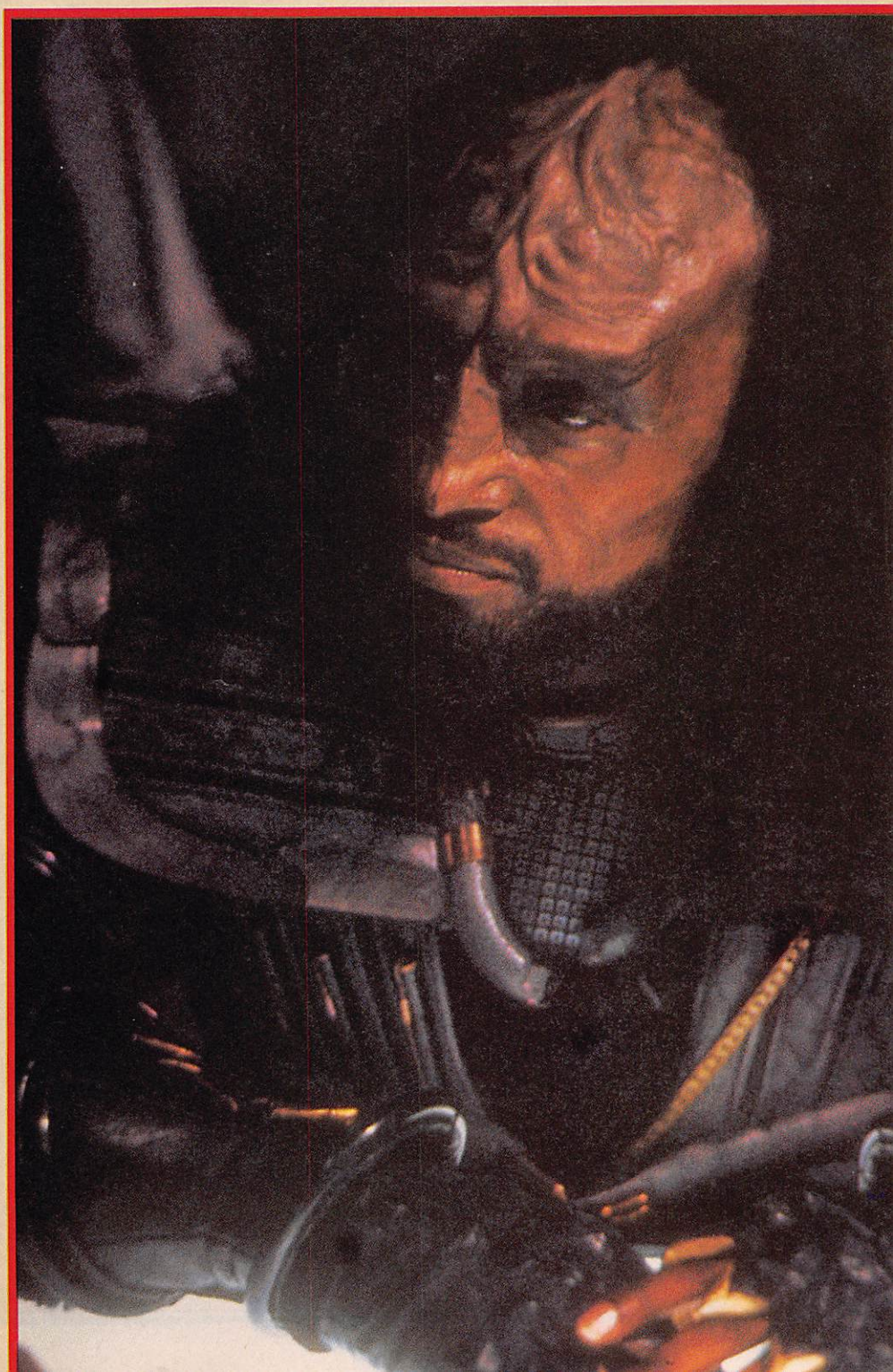
As Worf indicates he will accept discommendation, the assembled Klingons rise as one and each, in turn, turns his back on the Starfleet officer. At last, only Kurn remains.

"You must also..." Worf whispers.

And Kurn turns his back.

Picard and Worf together exit the chamber. ●

Picard advises Kurn to remember well the sacrifice that his brother has made. The matter of betrayal at Khitomer remains to be settled.



DATABASE

Eye Views

The *Eyes of the Beholders*, the latest *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION* novel, can best be described as a story with plenty of character, or rather, plenty of characterization. It's the kind of tale that author A.C. Crispin likes to write most.

"I really like to get into people's heads," Crispin says. "I enjoy writing the character-oriented stories." The novel, which focuses on the *U.S.S. Enterprise*'s attempts to escape from a mysterious alien artifact that causes insanity and death for those who near it, provides a look at the backgrounds of several of the *NCC-1701-D*'s commanding officers. Readers also become better acquainted with several other characters in the book, including Lieutenant Selar, the Vulcan physician (played by Suzie Plakson) whose only appearance was in the episode "The Schizoid Man."

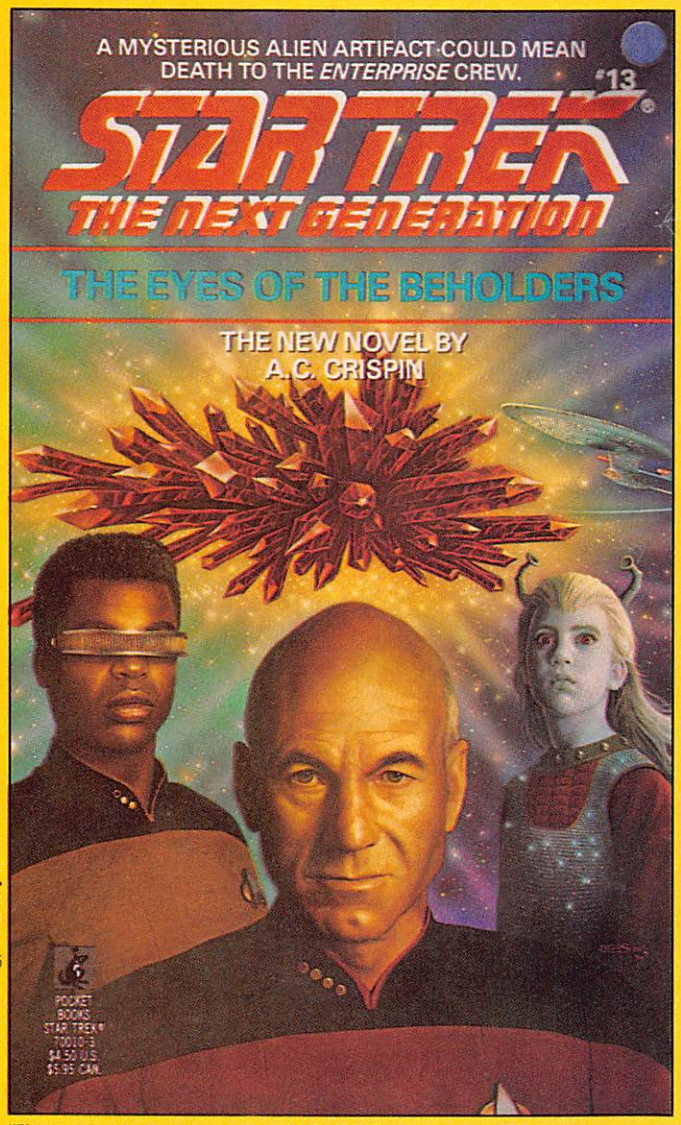
"I've never written a *STAR TREK* novel without a Vulcan in it, and I wasn't about to start now," laughs the author, whose credits include *Yesterday's Son* and *Time for Yesterday*, two bestselling novels set during the first *STAR TREK* series. "I also managed to get a number of new people introduced, and they were all aliens, which I was pleased about. I've missed not seeing more aliens as 'viewpoint characters,' so I wanted to put some in, such as Thala the Andorian and the Tellarite Gavar."

To delve more into the personalities and feelings of the main characters, Crispin used the artifact to make Captain Jean-Luc Picard and the crew relive their most emotional experiences through their dreams. "I especially enjoyed writing about Picard's dream and how he really felt about losing the *U.S.S. Stargazer*," she states. "I've always been very intrigued by the episode 'The Battle.' My father was a sea captain, and I know that the worst thing that could happen to a captain is for him to lose his ship, so I wanted to explore Picard's feelings about it.

"The thing I enjoyed most about *The Eyes of the Beholders* was having Data try to write a novel," the author adds. "I've taught writing workshops and semester-long courses at community colleges, and I was able to put into Data's mouth an awful lot of the things that new writers do. I was intrigued with the idea of Data trying to write such a novel and what it might sound like. So, I imagined that in the first scene I wrote, it was going to be a bizarre mix between Judith Krantz and Hal the computer from *2001: A Space Odyssey*," she laughs.

Although Crispin may have had the most fun with Data, her favorite character is Geordi La Forge. "I've always thought that Geordi was a very appealing character, and I've always liked LeVar Burton."

—*Michael McAvennie*



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"I've never written a *STAR TREK* novel without a Vulcan in it, and I wasn't about to start now," admits A.C. Crispin about including Lt. Selar in "The Eyes of the Beholder."

Picard's Options

"Ecology and ecological concerns are recurring themes in my books," says Howard Weinstein, author of the upcoming *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION* novel *Exiles*. "I never set out to write them that way, but it seems to be that that's just a constant in my mind."

This time, Weinstein's ecological themes affect Alaj and Etolos, two feuding worlds now suffering from crippling disasters and impending doom. Deciding that they are each other's only hope for survival, the two planets summon the *U.S.S. Enterprise* to negotiate peace between them and begin rescue efforts. An unexpected third party determined to destroy both worlds enters the fray, however, and Captain Jean-Luc Picard is caught in a situation in which any choice he makes may mean the deaths of countless innocents.

"The key to the book is in my intro," reveals the author, whose credits include *Power Hungry*, another *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION* book, and two *STAR TREK* novels, *Covenant of the Crown* and *Deep Domain*. "There's a brief note about the rate at which species are becoming extinct on this planet. That was the story's genesis in creating the Etolosans as people who specialize in preserving."

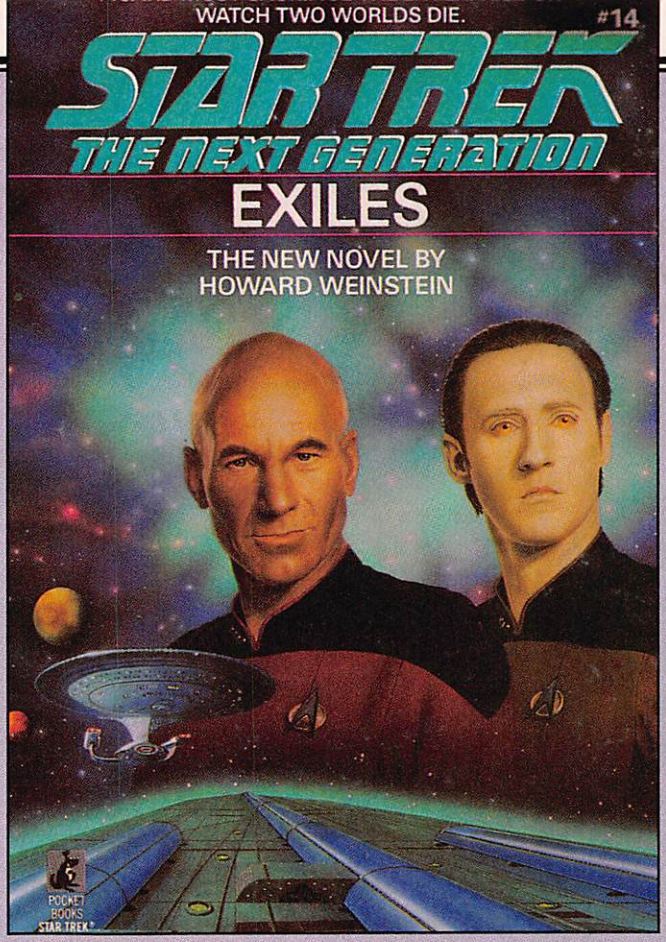
Picard's main predicament throughout *Exiles*, Weinstein adds, is that of preserving the Alajian and Etolosan races and combatting the forces that threaten to destroy them. "The story leads Picard in a direction in which he has to commit the *Enterprise* to its own destruction in order to save the two planets," the author says. "He has run out of options, and I

had two great scenes emphasizing his predicament that I thought worked very well. One is where Worf privately says to Picard, 'Destroying the ship is your only option. Geordi and I have cooked this up, but we didn't want to tell you because we didn't think you'd like it.' Picard tells him, 'Well, you're right. I don't like it, but I already thought of it myself, and thank you for telling it to me.'

"The other scene is the one I enjoyed writing the most," Weinstein continues, "in which Picard is trying to figure out how to tell the crew that he's about to kill all of them in 20 minutes. After all, it's not like you can plan for it, so I have him thinking momentarily, 'Maybe I shouldn't have taken this ship with civilians aboard.' He has a little discussion with Troi, who tells him, 'Just tell the crew the truth. They expect that from you, and it's the best you can give them.' "

Even if Picard does think of a way to save the *Enterprise* this time, Weinstein plans to keep the Captain busy with *Perchance to Dream*, another *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION* novel which Weinstein is now writing. In this story, Picard and the *Enterprise* head for a planet to search for a missing landing party made up of Data, Troi, Wesley and several young Starfleet officers. "The landing party is trapped by forces that have grabbed them out of space and buried them inside the planet," the author explains. "As the *Enterprise* searches for them, another ship carrying a homeless race arrives and claims the planet as their home. And Jean-Luc Picard wants to help this race."

—*Michael McAvennie*



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While Picard ponders the destruction of the *Enterprise*, Howard Weinstein explores real dangers to our future.

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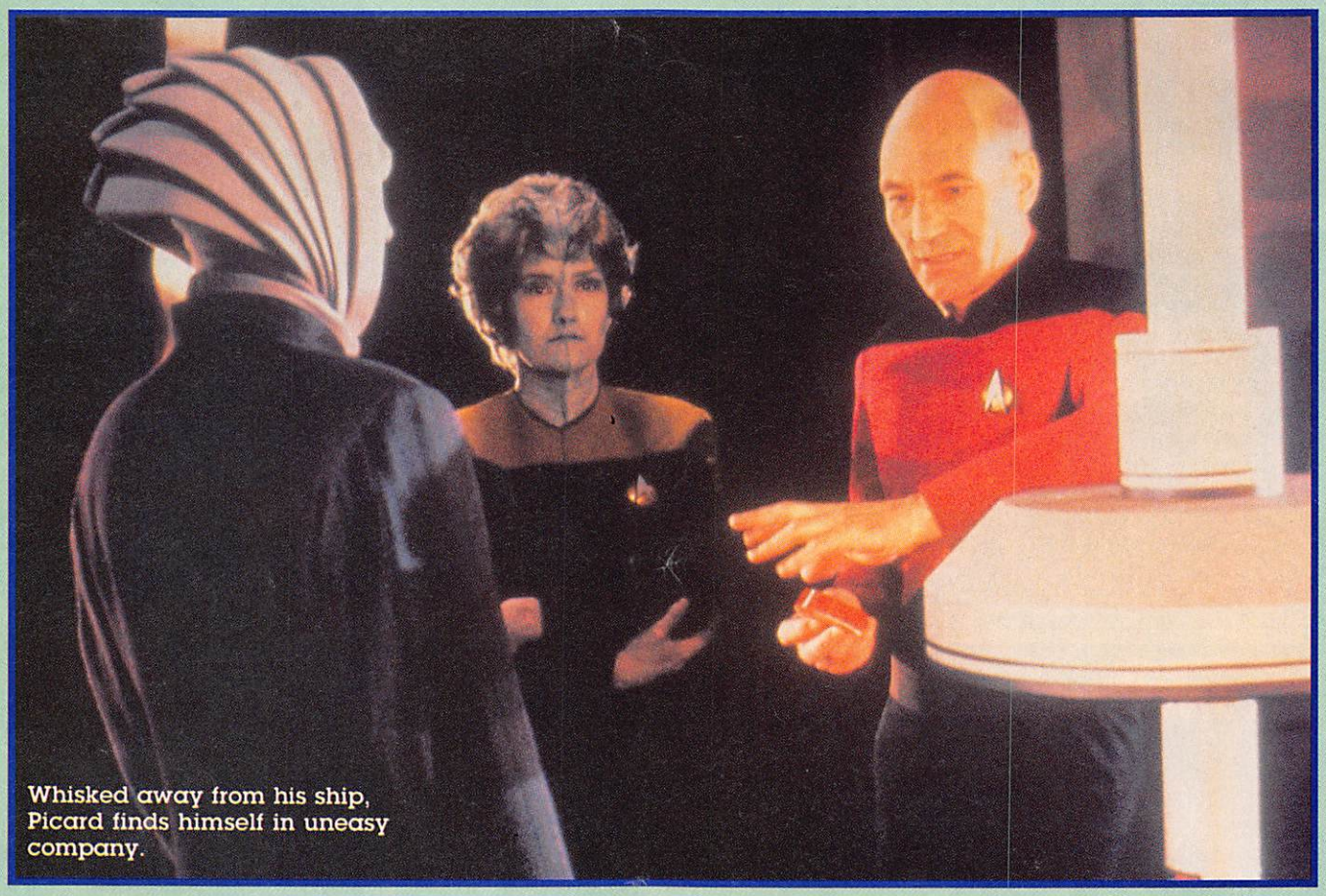
"Allegiance"

Written by RICHARD MANNING & HANS BEIMLER
Based on STAR TREK created by GENE RODDENBERRY
Synopsis for STARLOG by ROBERT GREENBERGER

MISSION REPORT



Whisked away from his ship, Picard finds himself in uneasy company.

There's little that Captain Jean-Luc Picard enjoys more than time to relax with a good book after completing one mission and before beginning the next, in this case, a rendezvous with the *U.S.S. Hood*. However, just as he begins to doze off, a strange, metallic slab materializes over his prone form. Swiftly, the slab takes a measure of Picard's body amidst a weird crackling energy.

At that moment, instruments on the Bridge register the energy presence. Data calls it to the attention of Commander Will Riker, who attempts to alert Picard to their situation. When there's no immediate answer, Worf dispatches a security team to the Captain's quarters.

Worf and his security team arrive at Picard's door, and before they force it open, *Picard* opens it from the inside and asks if anything is wrong. Worf is surprised.

Meanwhile, in an elsewhere he knows not, the real Picard walks over to a young woman lying on her bunk, in a Starfleet cadet's uniform. He checks her for a pulsebeat and finds her reviving. She is Mitena Haro, a Bolian cadet snatched from her studies perhaps three days earlier, and she is pleased to be found by the man whose missions she has studied at the Academy.

Their discussion is joined by the revived Kova Tholl from Mizar Two. He estimates having been in the room for 12 days.

Looking around, Picard walks to the door and investigates the locking mechanism. Tholl explains that he has tried random combinations on the lock, but his efforts were rewarded by a painful jolt of energy. Escape, he notes, will not be possible.

As the trio settle into their quarters, the *Enterprise* remains en route to the *Hood* when "Picard" casually asks Lt. Commander Data about the nearest pulsar in the Lonka Cluster. Upon hearing Data's reply, the "Captain" orders Ensign Wesley Crusher to take the starship to the pulsar at Warp Two, delaying their rendezvous with the *Hood*.

In the holding cell, the gen-

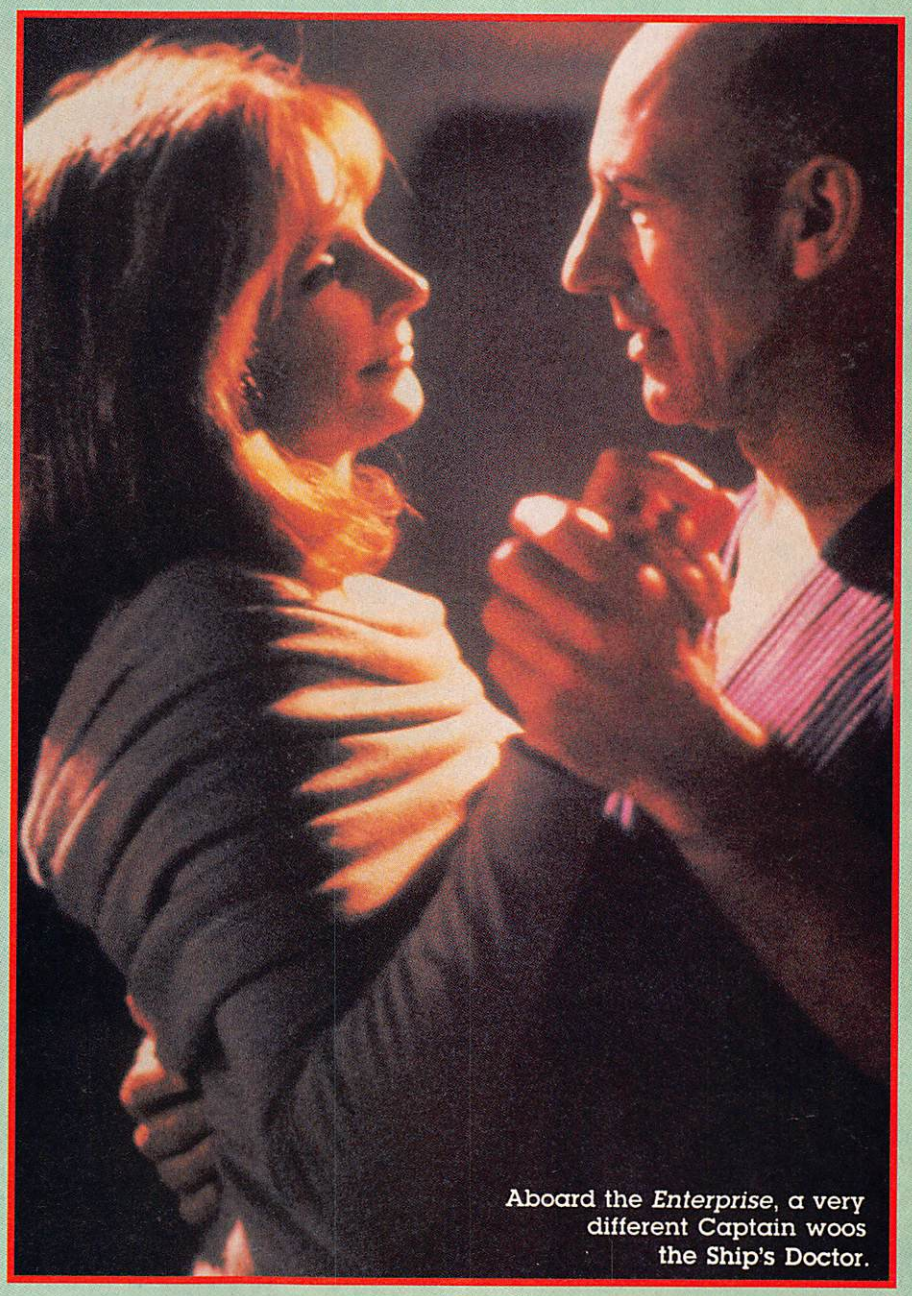
uine Captain taps out the first six prime numbers on the lock panel. Haro approves of her superior officer attempting to let their captors know that they're intelligent, but Tholl is skeptical about the effort. Picard stops and begins to question his compatriots. Why them? he wonders aloud. Haro is a specialist in impulse propulsion systems, but she's not sure if this makes her especially valuable. Picard observes that the Bolians are maintaining something of an uneasy truce with the Moropa but their cell does not resemble their technology.

Tholl says his race, the Mizarians, have never heard of the Moropa. "My race has no enemies," Tholl says. Picard is incredulous, noting the Mizari have been conquered six times in the last 300 years. Tholl reminds him that his people still exist precisely because they have never put up a fight against any of their oppressors.

Before Picard can question either of them further, the fourth bunk begins to show energy sparkles. The large, dangerous bulk of Esoqq takes shape. Esoqq quickly regains consciousness. Taking an attack posture, he faces his fellow captives. Swiftly, Picard takes charge, signaling the others to remain still. He tries to reason with Esoqq, pointing out they are *all* captives. They all wish to return to their own worlds.

"Were you abducted from Chalna?" Picard asks. "I visited there 12 years ago, while commanding the *Stargazer*."

Esoqq sheaths his knife.



Aboard the *Enterprise*, a very different Captain woos the Ship's Doctor.

On board the *Enterprise*, the weekly card game is in progress in Data's quarters. As the tension mounts everyone is surprised to see "Captain Picard" walk in. Picard has never been to the poker game before and it's odd that he would interrupt with questions about engine efficiency status. When La Forge says that the engines are operating at 93 percent, "Picard" smiles tightly and observes he would prefer to see that boosted to 95. La Forge immediately leaves the game to please his "Captain."

The four captives sit and discuss their situation, exchanging information about each other, searching for common threads.

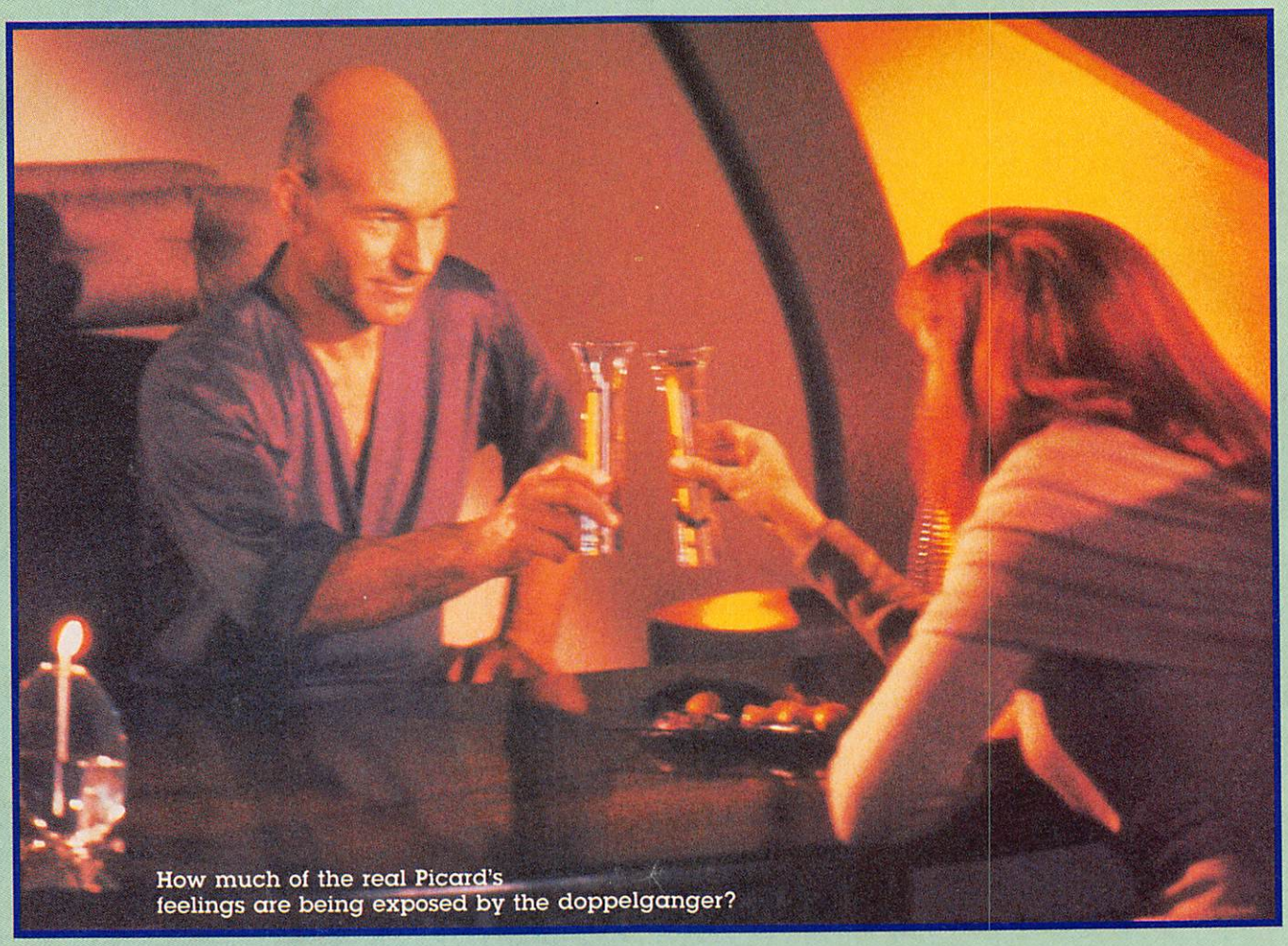
Esoqq investigates the food dispenser. Trying the substance, he spits it out, calling it poison. Esoqq takes a close look at Tholl and suggests *he'll* be dinner when Esoqq gets hungry.

In the Sick Bay, Dr. Beverly Crusher is testing "Picard." After certifying him fit, she asks why he came in. He points out that usually she has to order him to report for a physical and that he thought he would spare her the trouble. Then, Picard invites her to dinner in his quarters, startling the Doctor. "Jean-Luc you are full of surprises today," she says.

"I'll take that to be a yes," "Picard" notes.

With Esoqq to worry about, Picard has decided the time has come for action and he begins to test the door. Tholl argues that so far, their captors have done nothing harmful to them. Picard refuses to let Esoqq starve, and Tholl refuses to help any escape attempt.

Esoqq smashes a panel at Picard's command and then Haro looks inside to study the circuitry. She says she can cross-circuit the mechanism and he orders her to proceed. Shortly after she begins her work, the green punishing energy en-



How much of the real Picard's feelings are being exposed by the doppelganger?

velopes Esoqq, Picard and Haro, bringing them to their knees, gasping for breath. Tholl, untouched, says, "I warned you."

In the Captain's quarters, "Picard" and Crusher sit in casual evening wear and share a sumptuous meal over candlelight. Their conversation has drifted from chit-chat to something more important: the choices they've made. Should they become closer? Or as Crusher says, should they be comfortable with their relationship? It's a conversation teeming with possibilities.

They rise to dance. Their physical attraction brings them closer together. "Picard" and Crusher share a kiss.

"Jean-Luc, if I didn't know you better, I'd think you were playing games with me."

Suddenly, "Picard" decides enough is enough for the night and escorts the bewildered Doctor to the door, leaving her without a goodnight kiss.

Now recovered, the prisoners begin to hurl accusations back and forth, leaving the question hanging that one of them might be behind the abductions. Is Tholl the collaborator? Esoqq? Haro? Tholl points out that Picard has done nothing but give orders since his arrival. Haro shoots back that Picard has an exemplary record of helping other cultures such as those on Mintaka Three. Or, Picard adds, "Cor Caroli Five."

"Right—helping to cure the Phyrox Plague!"

Riker, Troi and La Forge are enjoying a break in Ten-Forward when the conversation turns to wondering about "Captain Picard's" actions and his "unusual orders." Before their speculation can continue, "Picard" himself walks in and announces his pleasure at how well the crew has performed. In fact, he announces that now it is time for relaxation, ordering ales for everyone. Then, he leads them in a vintage drinking song. Watching, incredulous, is a worried Riker. "What's the Captain up to?" La Forge asks.

"That's not the Captain I know," says Riker.

Picard has defused the speculations about whether or not he is the captor, speaks stirringly to get his three fellow prisoners to trust each other and plan escape.

The *Enterprise* has gotten close to the pulsar and "Picard" asks Ensign Crusher to bring the starship much closer to the phenomena. Data points out that such proximity will endanger the entire ship and crew since the shields will be effective for only 18 minutes. Riker seizes the moment to ask the "Captain" into his own Ready Room. Once there, Riker points out that "Picard" is needlessly endangering everyone. "Picard" suggests that perhaps it's Riker who's wrong, Riker who should be relieved, Riker who should report to Sick Bay for treatment of stress.

Haro has been working on the exposed panel once again and is

close to succeeding in bypassing the energy weapon. Esoqq reluctantly hands over his knife to cut a cable and Picard insists on being the one to make the cut, just in case. He succeeds and they get the door open to reveal—a wall.

"Picard" once again orders Crusher to bring the ship closer to the pulsar but Riker countermands him. The "Captain" whirls and relieves Riker, ordering Worf to confine Riker to his quarters. But Worf doesn't move. To "Picard's" surprise, the entire Bridge crew sides with Riker, who just watches. "You've shown none of the concerns that Captain Picard would for the safety of this ship, the welfare of his crew," Riker announces.

Just then, in the mysterious cell, Picard, after listening to the arguments between Esoqq and Tholl, turns and asks Haro if the charade has gone on long enough. "This isn't a holding cell," he explains. "It's a laboratory maze—a carefully structured test to see how well we react under pressure." The real Captain proves his point by noting that the Cor Caroli Five plague has been classified "secret" by Starfleet so a cadet couldn't possibly know about it.

"I'm quitting the game," Picard says. "As far as I'm concerned, this experience is over."

Haro dissolves into three identical alien beings. They reveal that individual life forms interest them so these three were replaced with replicas and brought to this room for study. With their secret revealed, the study has been stopped and they will be returned to their places of origin.

Romantic interludes are a luxury the real Picard doesn't have as he faces Esoqq.

The Captain reappears on the Bridge with one of the aliens. Everyone is relieved to see what must be the actual Picard and their suspicions are confirmed when the false Captain shapeshifts into one of the aliens. While questioning the aliens, Picard has exchanged a glance with Data. As the android works on his console, the aliens explain they were studying leadership, not something their race is familiar with. "We wanted to examine the nature of command," one alien says.

At Riker's command, Worf turns on a forcefield, designed to handle the specific energy pattern of the aliens. While trapped, Picard angrily informs them that abducting sentient beings for their study is not a moral act.

Stressing that any form of captivity is wrong, the aliens must learn that they cannot randomly capture others for their own curiosity. With a curt "Get off my ship," Picard has the energy cone turned off and the aliens immediately transport off the vessel.

With order restored, Picard orders Ensign Crusher to have the *Enterprise* return to rendezvous with the *Hood*.

Dr. Crusher enters the Bridge.

"Doctor," says Picard by way of greeting.

"Captain," she says. And gives him a glance.

And he wonders. ●

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"Captain's Holiday"

Written by IRA STEVEN BEHR
Based on STAR TREK created by GENE RODDENBERRY
Synopsis for STARLOG by PATRICK DANIEL O'NEILL

MISSION REPORT

With Captain Picard feeling weary after a strenuous negotiating session, his senior officers begin a campaign to convince him to take a vacation which he "loathes."

Finally, Picard agrees to a shore leave on the planet of Riker's suggestion—Risa, known for its sybaritic resorts. Riker also asks the Captain to find him a souvenir, called a Horga'hn.

Picard doesn't know that two aliens, called Vorgons, have asked his arrival date—days before even Picard knew he was coming to Risa.

As he materializes on the planet, Picard immediately has a run-in with a stunning brunette named Vash. Seeking to avoid contact with a Ferengi named Sovak, the woman pretends to recognize Picard and greets him with a passionate kiss.

"Welcome to Risa," she says.

"A simple handshake would have sufficed," Picard dryly observes. Sovak is warned off by the "chance encounter"...and later the Vorgons also spot Picard.

The next morning, Picard discovers the secret of Riker's souvenir request: the Horga'hn sitting next to him and causing frequent interruptions is the Risian sexuality symbol and anyone holding one is making a silent request for sexual companionship. Nonplussed, Picard hides his Horga'hn.

He also meets Sovak, who delivers a mysterious warning. "I know you're working with her. It's a mistake," the Ferengi tells Picard. "Tell her I want the disc returned to me immediately."

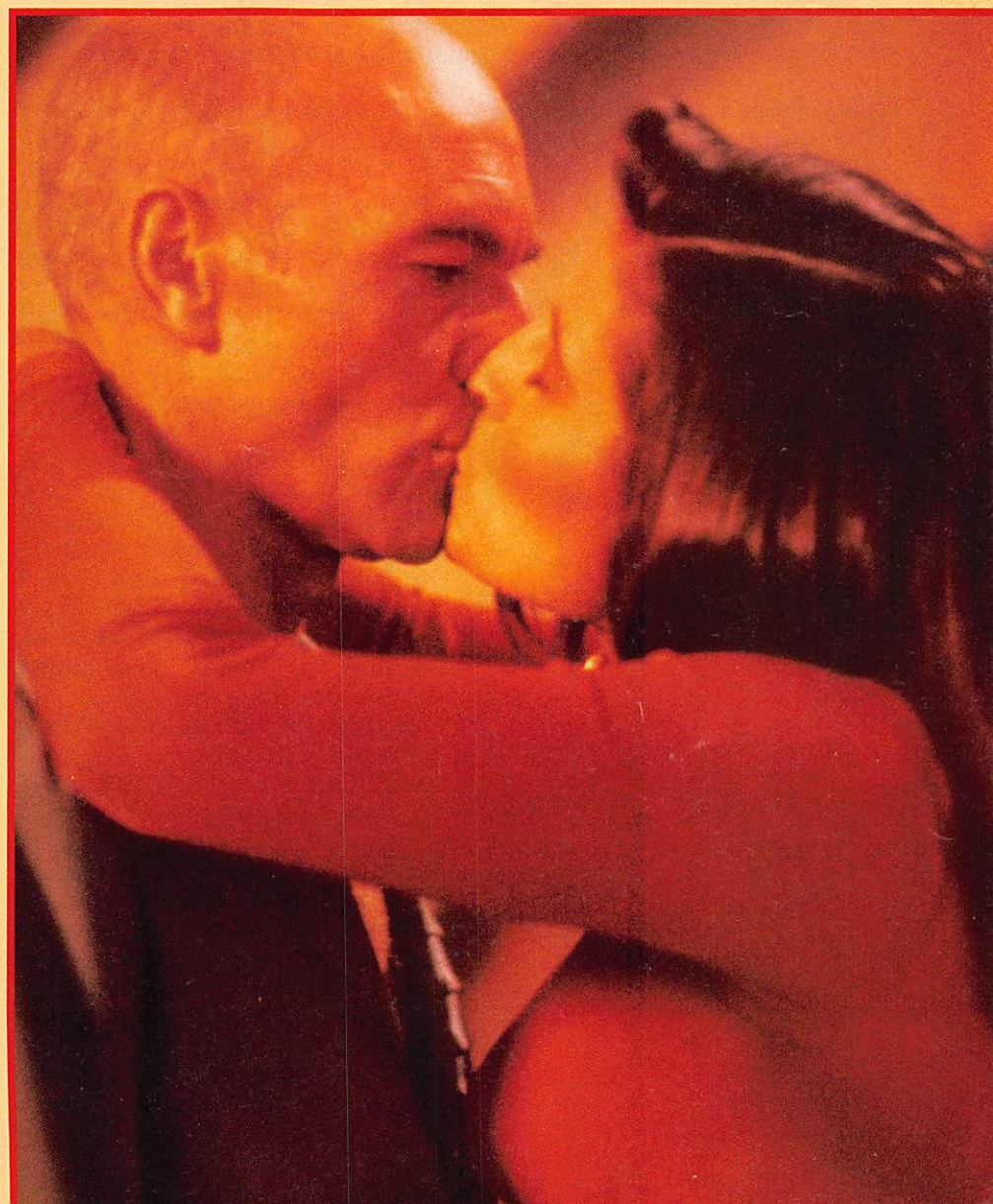
Despite the Ferengi's threats, Picard remains adamant that he doesn't know what the alien is talking about. "I came to Risa for a holiday, nothing more," he says evenly. "I have no knowledge of this woman of whom you speak, nor have I set eyes on any disc."

"You expect me to believe such feeble lies?" Sovak asks.

Now, Picard is angry. "I don't care what you believe."

The Captain's manner finally has an effect on the Ferengi. "This is not over yet, human," he says as he leaves. "The disc is mine...and so is the woman. Remember that."

Sovak no sooner departs than the "woman" shows up. Vash admits that she and Sovak know each other, but Picard isn't interested in explanations; he wants to be left alone.



He knew she was trouble from the moment he laid eyes on her.

From 300 years in the future, the Vorgons, Azur and Baratas, have traveled to retrieve a deadly artifact that leads to Captain Picard.

The Vorgons aren't the only ones after the precious Uthat. On holiday, Picard finds himself caught in the intrigue between the Ferengi Sovak and Vash.

As Picard excuses himself, the bartering between Vash and Sovak continues. Picard, apparently, is never to have the privacy he seeks, for he finds the Vorgons, Azur and Baratas, waiting in his room. They explain that they are time travelers, from some 300 years in the future, searching for a legendary device called the Tox Uthat. They tell him it is a quantum phase inhibitor, capable of halting nuclear reaction within a star. Criminals have stolen the object, which is originally from their time.

They have sought out Picard because future records tell of his finding an object of unknown origin on Risa—an object that could be the Uthat. He agrees to give them the object, if he does indeed find it "since it belongs to your time, not mine."

Later that day, Picard confronts Vash with the disc she had hidden in his belongings. He discovers that Vash was once the assistant to Professor Samuel Estergon, a scientist searching for the Uthat. This disc contains his notes and maps. She explains that Sovak, who sometimes aided the scientist, now wants the Uthat for sale to the highest bidder. She maintains that she only wants to present it to the Daystrom Institute.

Picard suggests that he take over the search. Vash refuses, insisting they work together. "From the moment I met you, I knew you were going to be trouble," he tells her.

"You look like a man who could handle trouble," she replies.

But as the two prepare to leave on their expedition, they are stopped by Sovak, brandishing a weapon. Sovak's story is somewhat different: "Do you know how she acquired the disc in the first place? I paid her to steal it," he tells Picard. "But instead, she betrayed me."

Working as a team, Vash and Picard escape Sovak's trap and leave for the archaeology site. That night, as Picard and Vash camp out, she admits there is some truth to Sovak's story. He did pay her for the disc—but she kept the money in order to pursue her own search for the Uthat.

"Any woman who can beat a Ferengi at his own game bears watching," Picard notes.

"I'll take that as a compliment," she answers. "I'm flattered."

The affection between the two grows until they share another passionate kiss which Picard initiates.

"Still think I'm trouble?" Vash asks.

"I'm sure of it," Jean-Luc Picard replies.

Reaching their destination the next day, they discover they will have to dig for the object. The Vorgons appear just as they begin the work.

"They are security officers from the 27th Century," Picard explains. "They're here to take back the Uthat."

"You knew about this and didn't say anything?" she asks.

"I'm sorry, Vash," he apologizes. "Would you have brought me here if you knew?"

"Probably not," she allows. And the gang's all here: Sovak

arrives, now waving a larger weapon. "So the betrayer herself is betrayed," he says. Using the weapon as a threat, the Ferengi becomes the overseer of the excavating operation. The Vorgons look on without interfering.

But after many hours of digging, Picard is ready to admit defeat—the Uthat isn't here. Sovak refuses to believe that. But even Vash is convinced of it now. "According to the disc, we should have reached it hours ago." Reaching the same conclusion, the Vorgons dematerialize.

Sovak still won't accept the obvious. He throws away his weapon, grabs a shovel and begins digging in a frenzy. "The Uthat is here! Somewhere! Just waiting to be found!" he pants between shovelfuls. "It can't hide from me forever!"

That evening, Picard is contacted by the *Enterprise*, and tells Riker to be prepared for "Transporter Code 14." The Captain waits in the Risa resort's patio, accidentally encountering Vash as she's leaving. He asks to see where she has hidden the Tox Uthat. He tells her that she deliberately let Sovak follow them to the site. "That was the *only* way that he could be convinced your quest had been futile."

"But how could I have known the Uthat wasn't there?" she asks.

"Because you had been there once before—probably the moment you arrived on the planet. That's when you found it," he says.

"You're a man of many talents, Jean-Luc," Vash admits, with a reluctant smile. She picks up a small Horga'hn from the resort shrine. Within it is the Tox Uthat. "A piece of the future."

"A very dangerous piece," says Picard.

And with that, the Vorgons are back. But Vash is reluctant still. "It was two Vorgons who attempted to steal the Uthat in the first place—for all we know, it could be them."

The Vorgons continue their demand for the object. "As you yourself said, the Uthat belongs to the future," one says.

"But not necessarily to you," Picard points out.

Moving quickly, he puts the Uthat on the floor, and calls for "Transporter Code 14." In a moment, the device shimmers in the transporter effect and then explodes.

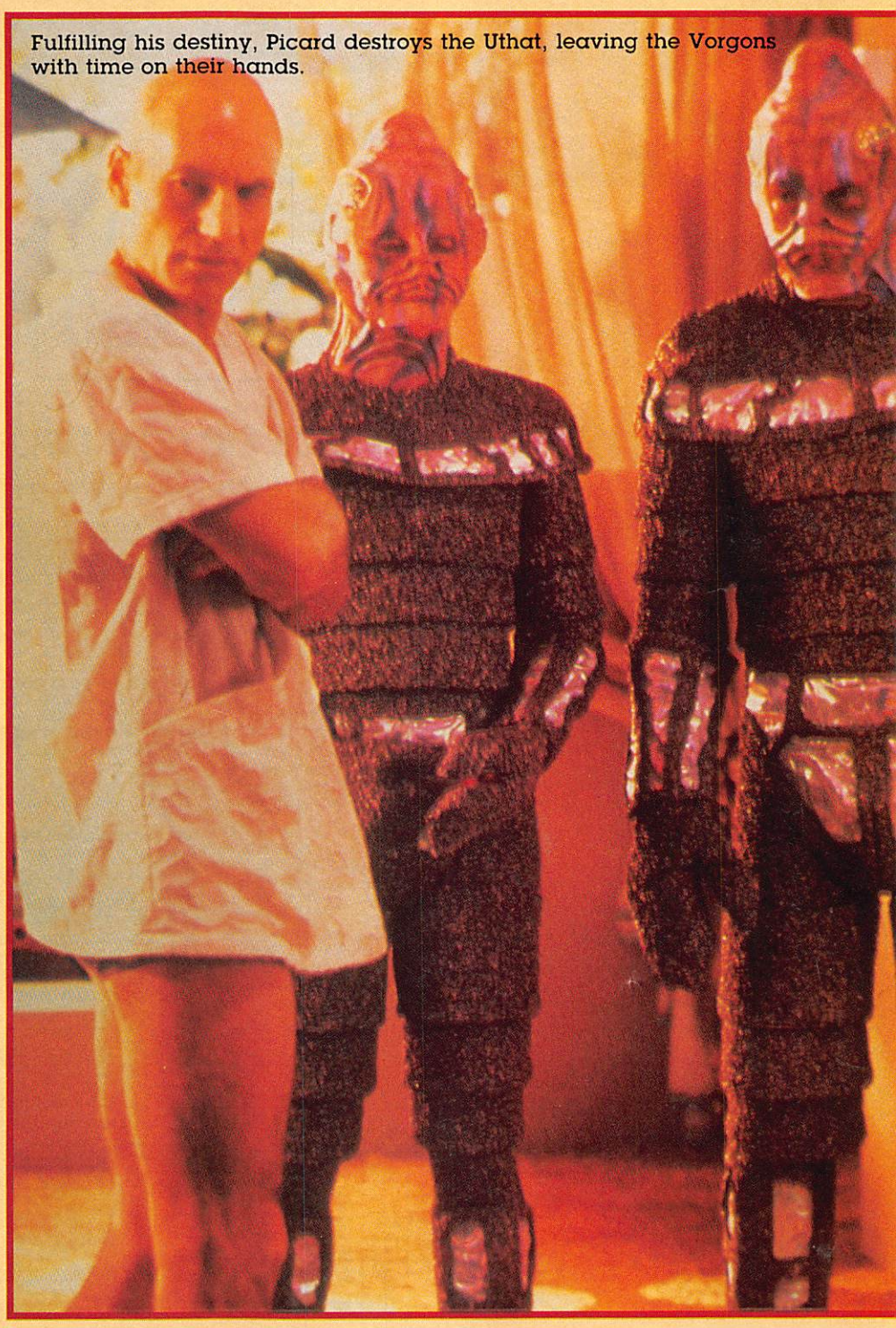
"History recorded that you destroyed the Uthat," the Vorgons note. "You have fulfilled your destiny all too well, Picard." Then, the Vorgons vanish.

Picard and Vash at last say reluctant goodbyes. "Promise me: You *will* try and stay out of trouble," he suggests.

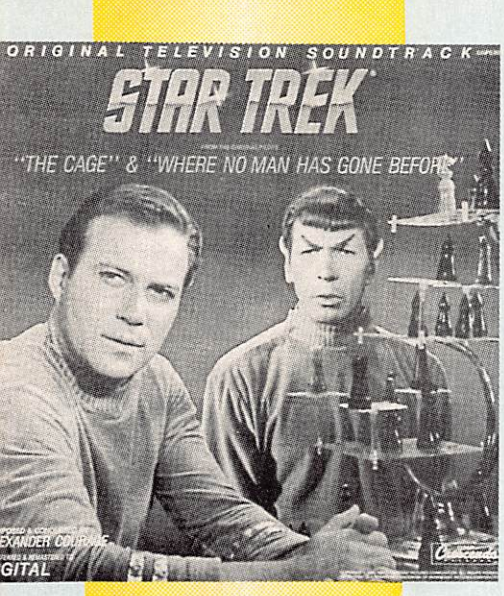
"I always *try*," she smiles.

And Picard returns to the *Enterprise*. He greets Riker and Troi, then says, "Number One...about that Horga'hn you requested: You and I need to have a little chat about that."

As the Captain departs, Riker is beaming. "I knew he'd have a great time." ●



Fulfilling his destiny, Picard destroys the Uthat, leaving the Vorgons with time on their hands.



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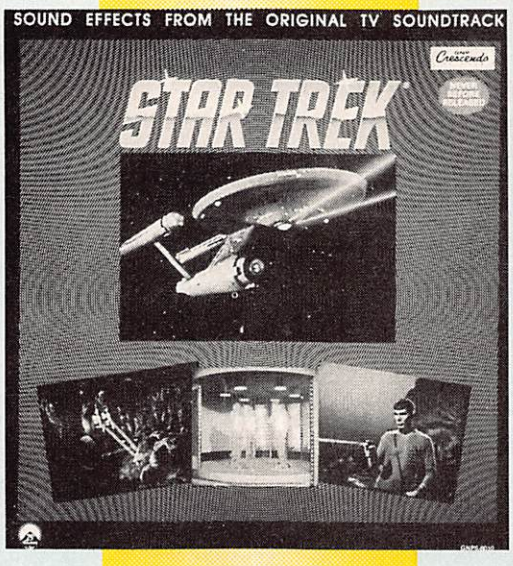

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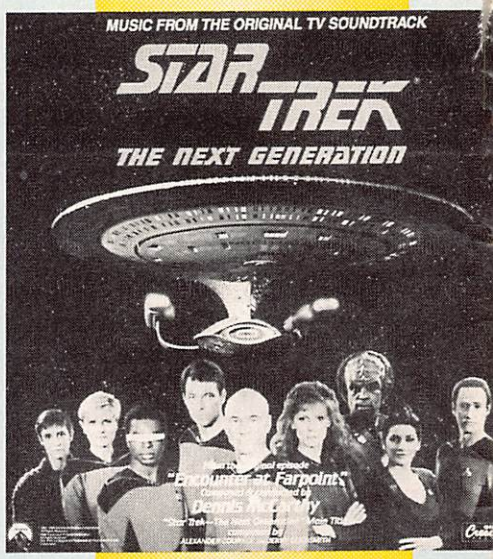

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"Tin Man"

By DENNIS PUTMAN BAILEY & DAVID BISCHOFF
Based on STAR TREK created by GENE RODDENBERRY
Synopsis for STARLOG by PATRICK DANIEL O'NEILL

MISSION REPORT

While on a routine charting mission, the *Enterprise* has an emergency rendezvous with the *U.S.S. Hood*. The *Hood* transfers one Tam Elbrun, a Betazoid, to the *Enterprise*, carrying orders for a very special mission. Elbrun's specialty provides a clue to the mission: He is an expert in first contact. Both Riker and Troi know of him. Riker heard of his work at Ghorusda, when a first contact went seriously wrong—and Troi knew him on Betazed. A colleague?

"He was a patient," she says.

She explains the situation to Picard. "Tam is a telepath of extraordinary talent, even for a Betazoid," she says. "He's...a very unique person." She pauses. "But he's *not* what you might expect, Captain."

Indeed not. Picard finds Elbrun to be abrupt, rude and tactless. He uses his ability to read minds to tell people what they're thinking before they can get the words out. But suddenly, he is brought up short, as Data approaches him from behind. "Sir—" the android begins.

"Who—what are you?" Elbrun asks, startled.

"I am Data. An android."

"Incredible, an android," Elbrun realizes, after picking up the information from Troi's mind. "I can't read you at all. It's like you're not there."

As the assembled officers head for the briefing room, Riker tells Geordi about Ghorusda. Forty-seven people were killed, due to Captain Darson's carelessness about Ghorusdan cultural taboos.

"But if Elbrun was so good, why didn't he warn Darson?" Riker asks rhetorically. "What was he doing there if he couldn't sense that much hostility?"

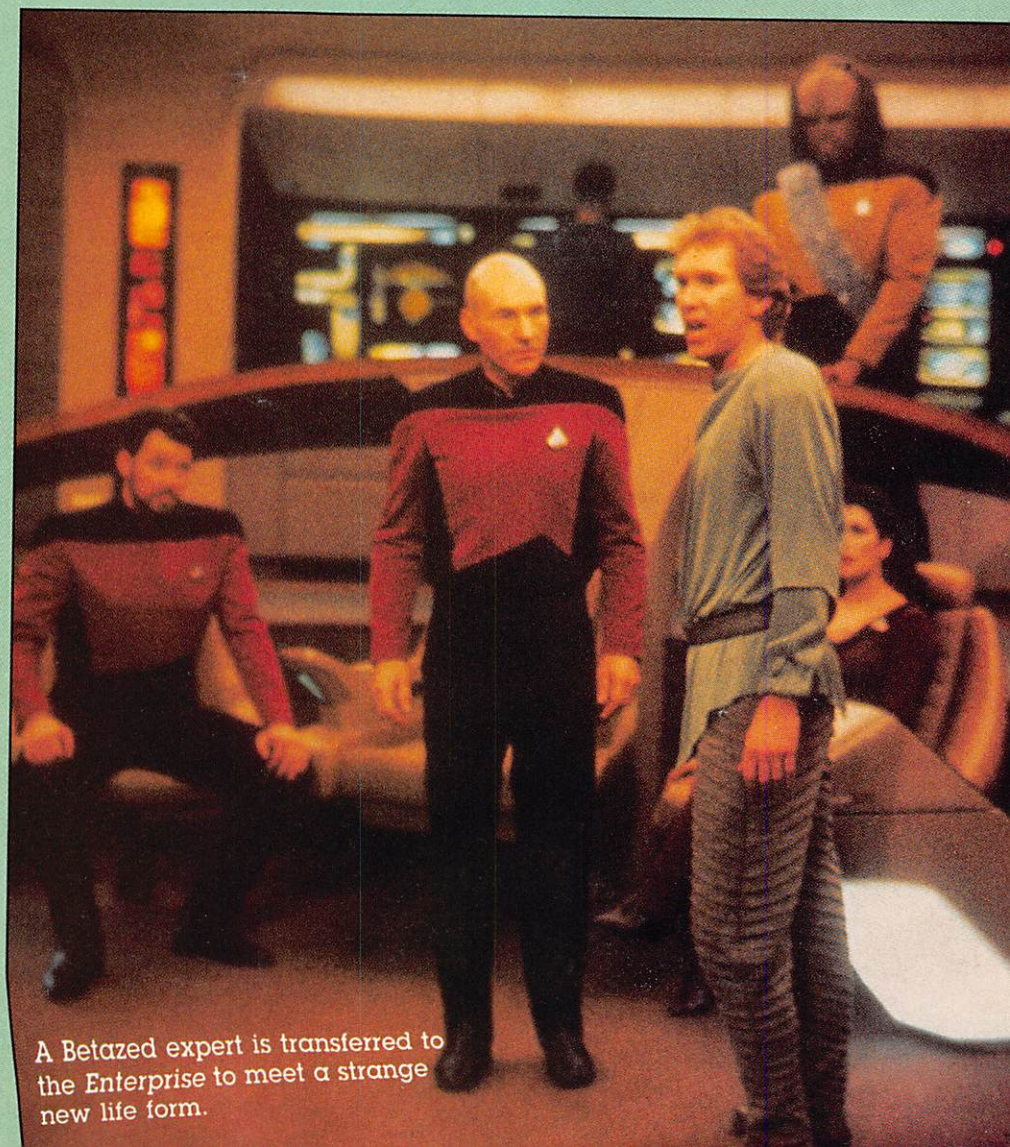
At the briefing, a seemingly distracted Elbrun explains the mission. A Starfleet deep-space probe has discovered an alien life form, dubbed "Tin Man," in orbit around the star Beta Stromgren, which is about to go supernova. "The people who've studied the transmissions think it's a starship," he tells them. "And they're sure it's *alive*."

He goes on to explain that the organic creature is believed to have been born in space and lives there. "No one knows where it came from, or why it's here. But we're going to meet it. We're going to talk to it." His voice drops. "*I'm* going to talk to it."

Attempts have been made by other communication methods, but in "direct mind-to-mind contact" lies the only "real possibility for success."

There is a complication. The Romulans claim the sector of space in which Beta Stromgren is located and they also know about "Tin Man." Two Romulan warbirds are known to be heading for the alien as well. The *Enterprise* should be able to outrun them.

Elbrun has to be reminded about the Romulan threat and he admits to being distracted. Reacting to Riker's thoughts, he erupts. "No, Biliy boy, I wasn't



A Betazed expert is transferred to the Enterprise to meet a strange new life form.

distracted' on Ghorusda. If Darson had listened to me, no one would have died. I don't care whether you believe that or not." And he storms out.

Later, as the *Enterprise* speeds to Beta Stromgren at maximum warp, Troi tells Picard and Dr. Crusher why Elbrun is so unusual.

"In most Betazoids," Troi explains, "our telepathic gifts develop at adolescence." Elbrun was *born* able to read minds.

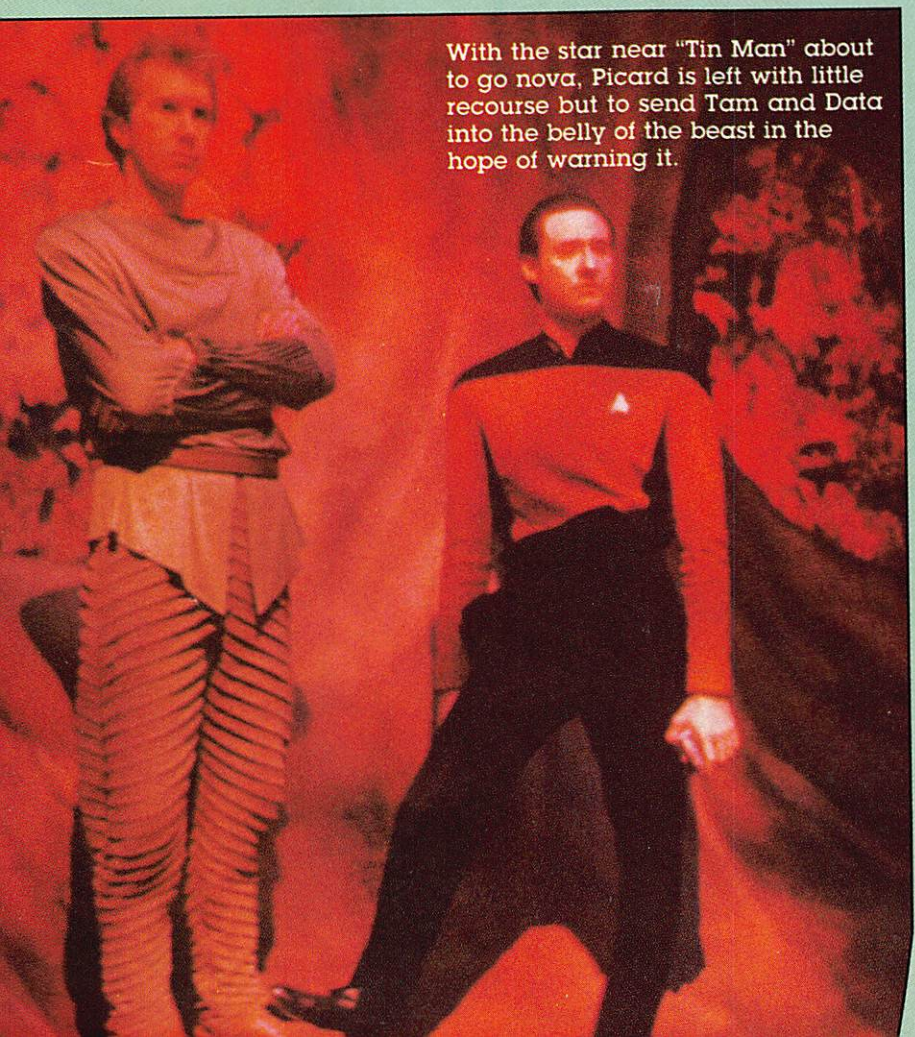
Beverly nods in understanding. "The noise of other people's thoughts and feelings must be overwhelming," she says, "incomprehensible...especially to a child." Troi agrees, although training—and frequent treatment for stress—has helped Elbrun adjust and reach success in his profession.

"He is the indispensable man," Picard announces, "the Federation's finest specialist in communication with unknown life forms."

"His personnel file shows he has gravitated toward assignments that isolate him from other humanoids," Dr. Crusher reports.

Meanwhile, sensors have picked up an unusual echo—most likely the Romulans covertly pursuing the ship.

With hostile Romulans in a race to make first contact, Tam Elbrun uses his mind powers to awaken "Tin Man."



With the star near "Tin Man" about to go nova, Picard is left with little recourse but to send Tam and Data into the belly of the beast in the hope of warning it.

Old friends Troi and Elbrun finally have a chance to talk alone. "I thought you might be lonely," she says.

"Lonely?" he asks. "I can hear everything that everyone on this ship thinks."

Complaining of the "tide of minds around him, Elbrun gives his side of the Ghorusdan disaster. "Maybe...I got too involved with the Ghorusdans, with *their* point-of-view. It happens to me. I *wanted* everyone to get along. I could have warned Darson more forcefully," he admits.

It is his interest in getting away from people that has led Elbrun into first contact service—and particularly to this assignment. As he talks about "Tin Man," this "intelligence that swims naked through space like a fish in the sea, ancient and alone, so lonely for so long," Troi comes to a realization.

"You're in contact with it. With 'Tin Man.' Aren't you?" she asks.

"Well, yes, a little. But not quite on a conscious level," Elbrun answers.

A short time later, the *Enterprise* approaches Beta Stromgren and "Tin Man." At that moment, a Romulan Warbird uncloaks and fires at the starship. The attack is only intended to delay the *Enterprise* enough to allow the Romulans to make first contact with "Ti

Man." They are so anxious to do so that they have irreparably damaged their warp engines in outracing the *Enterprise* to the alien. As Geordi works to repair the shield damage caused by the Romulan attack, Data and Elbrun begin to examine "Tin Man" through long-range sensors.

"The creature's anatomy appears most peculiar. It is indeed laid out as a vessel with what appears to be corridors and chambers," the android reports. "An internal environment suitable for carbon-based life forms is being maintained, yet there is no evidence of a crew aboard." He turns to the Betazoid. "'Tin Man' is a living being which has been bred or has adapted itself to serve a purpose. I find that interesting."

"Must living beings have a purpose?" Elbrun asks. "Or do we exist for no reason but to exist?"

When Data suggests he is not qualified to answer that philosophical question, Elbrun argues the opposite. "You're uniquely qualified. You think a great deal about humanity—and you're an honest researcher."

"You said you could not read my mind," Data protests.

"True enough," Elbrun says. "But I think I understand you pretty well. It worries you that I can't read your mind?"

"Perhaps," Data suggests. "there is nothing to read."

Both are on the Bridge as the Romulans attempt, without success, to contact "Tin Man." When they fail, the warbird instead arms its disruptors, intending to destroy the alien.

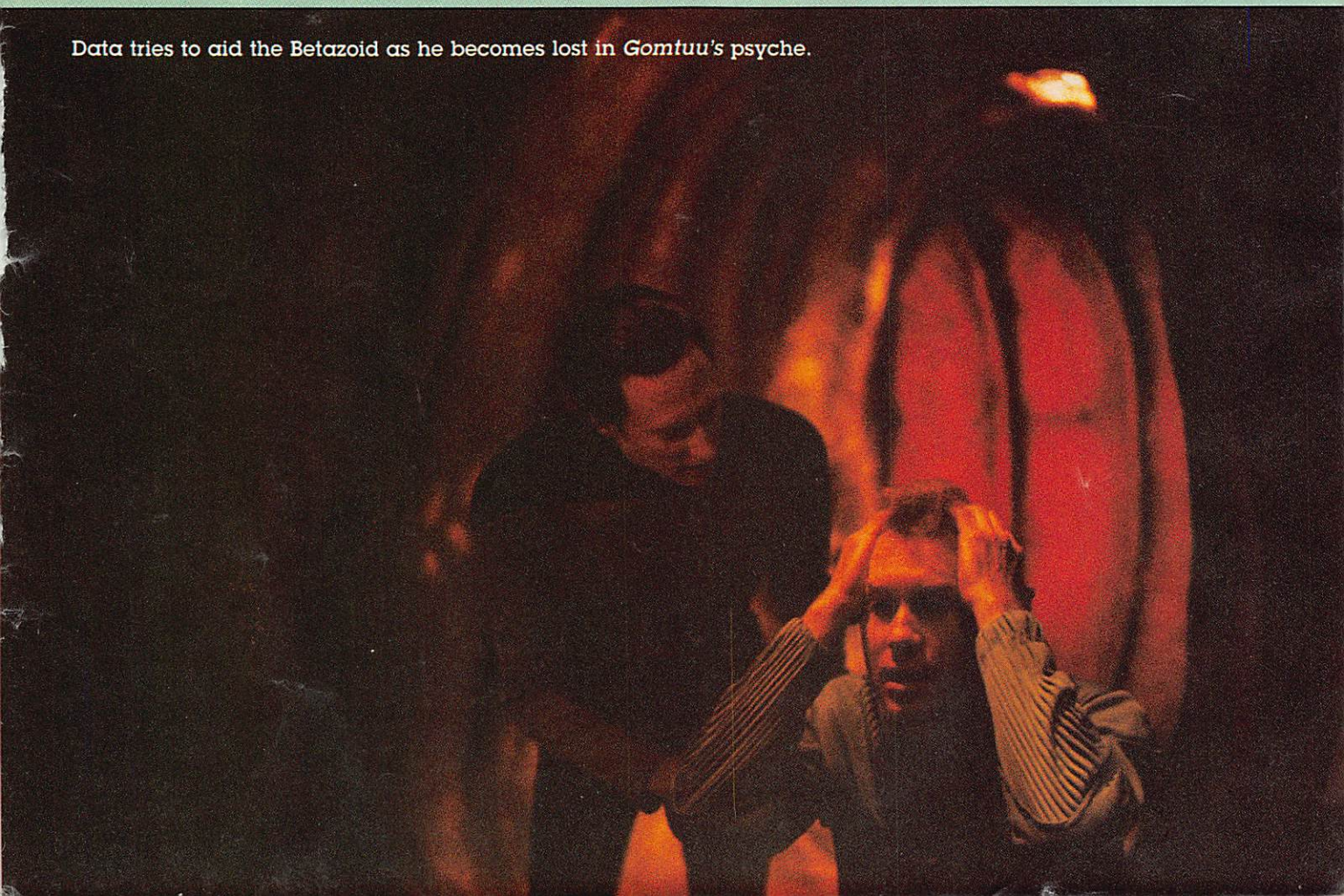
Realizing that the Romulans cannot be stopped by the *Enterprise*, Elbrun falls back on his hole card. Softly, he whispers, "Danger...Gomtuu...Do not allow!" And "Tin Man" erupts with a shock wave of energy in all directions, disintegrating the Warbird and causing a massive systems failure on the *Enterprise*.

Picard is furious with Elbrun. "It seems you woke your 'Tin Man.'" But Elbrun does not hear. His mind is with "Tin Man" Later, he is able to explain that he simply warned the creature—whose real name is Gomtuu—of the danger the Romulans posed.

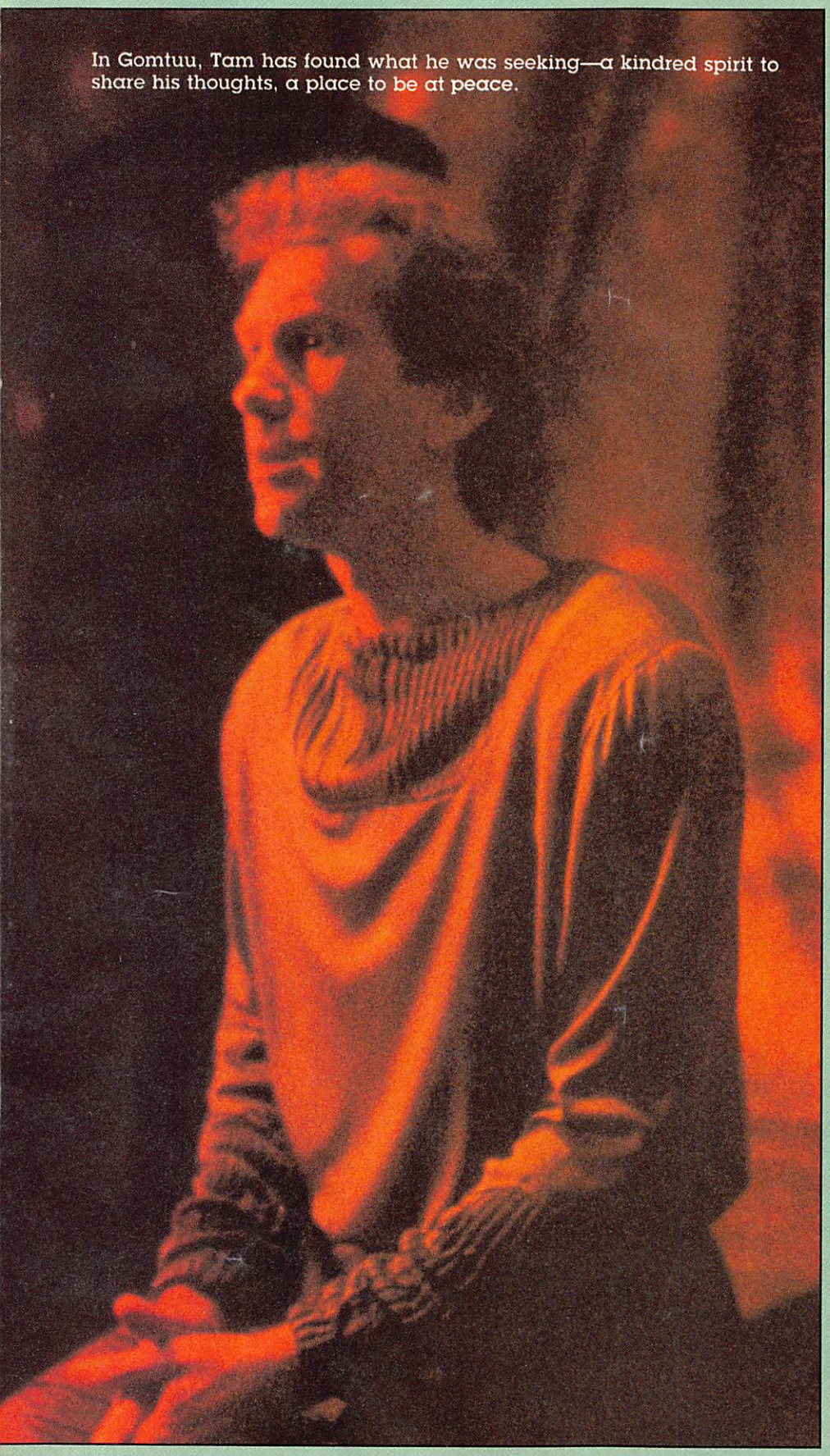
"It has roamed the universe for many thousands of years. It hasn't seen another of its kind for millennia. It's alone. It may be the last of its species," he tells Picard.

When the Captain suggests that the Federation may be able to assist Gomtuu, Elbrun protests, "Captain, Gomtuu *knows* that the star will go nova soon. That's why it's here. It *wants* to die." Since the death of its crew, he continues, Gomtuu has felt pain and emptiness—lack of purpose. "I can't do any more from out here," he sums up. "If you want me to really reach 'Tin Man,' I've got to go aboard."

Though Picard is at first reluctant to allow this, when the second Romulan Warbird appears, prepared to destroy "Tin Man" in retaliation for its sister ship's destruction, the Captain agrees to allow Elbrun and Data to



Data tries to aid the Betazoid as he becomes lost in *Gomtuu's* psyche.



In Gomtuu, Tam has found what he was seeking—a kindred spirit to share his thoughts, a place to be at peace.

beam aboard Gomtuu.

As they explore the interior of the "ship," Gomtuu throws up a force field, preventing them from returning to the *Enterprise*.

Data and Elbrun come to a conclusion about Gomtuu.

"The ship and the crew existed symbiotically. They needed one another. When Gomtuu had no one left to care for, it no longer had a reason to exist," Elbrun notes.

"Is that the purpose of existence?" Data asks. "To care for someone?"

"It is for me," Elbrun responds. A chair for Elbrun forms itself out of the 'Tin Man's' command center. He tells Data he will not return to the *Enterprise*—he is staying with Gomtuu.

"Finally, all the voices are silent," he continues. "Only 'Tin Man' speaks to me now. Don't you see, Data? This is where I belong."

Back on the *Enterprise*, the crew sees another energy pulse explode from "Tin Man," striking both the Warbird and the starship. This shock wave sends both ships tumbling out of control in different directions. When the *Enterprise* comes to rest, it is 3.8 billion kilometers from Beta Stromgren as the star at last goes nova. And Data materializes on the Bridge.

Later, as the ship limps back to Federation space, Data explains Elbrun's decision to Troi.

"I witnessed something remarkable," he tells her. "Individually, they were both so..."

"Wounded? Isolated?" Troi suggests.

"Yes, but no longer," Data says. "Through joining, they have been healed. Grief has been transmuted to joy. Loneliness to belonging."

"Data, you do understand..." Troi begins.

"Yes, Counselor, when 'Tin Man' returned me to the *Enterprise*, I realized that this is where *I* belong." ●

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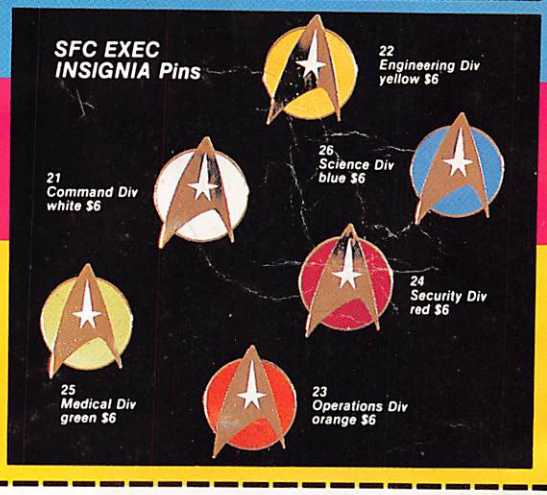

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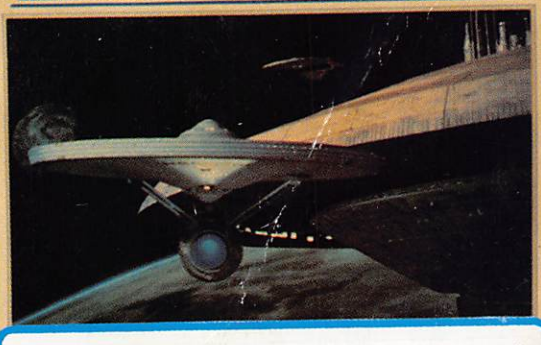

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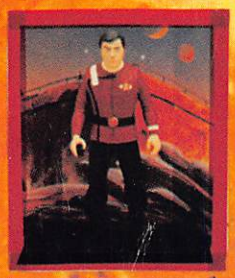

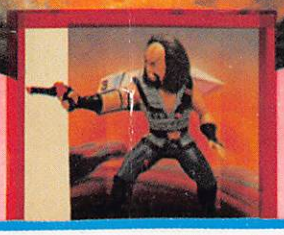

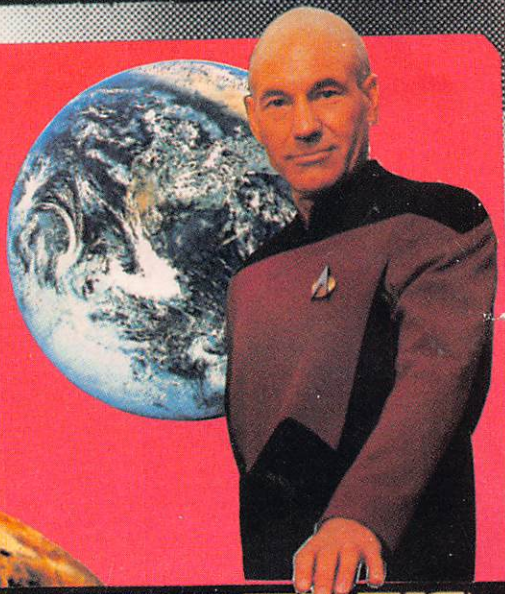

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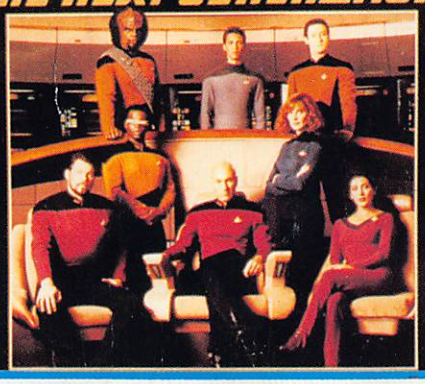

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